Art Meets Poetry 2026 Poetry Entries

27. “Vacation Aspiration” by A.J. Chilson.

VACATION ASPIRATION

Oh, I just can't wait to go on a vacation;
Not having one has led to so much frustration.

I really need to travel and visit places,
Locations known to create smiles on faces.

I want to see rivers, mountains and monuments,
So I can have memories that are permanent.

I would like to cheer at ballgames in different states,
And watch the athletes compete -- both average and great.

It would be nice to go to a music concert,
Or attend a matinee performed by experts.

Anything that I can witness during my life,
That’s what I want -- to avoid loneliness and strife.

Because I'll tell you this: staying at the same house --
All the time -- it makes me want to run like a mouse.

28. “Poem 248: DIVERGENCE” by Isaac Philo. Reserved by artist Matthew Delarocha.

Poem 248: “DIVERGENCE”

It wasn’t a voice that sang to me.
No name encircled its subtle flash.
It spoke like waking,
cloaked in flaking
stones amidst volcanic ash.

And no convergence mulling markings,
pattern-matching, counting carvings,
in discernment, could match divergence:
the flint and fiber, steel and sparking,

specter of the sickle’s surfeit:
sing a new song, chasing purpose;
molding mental matter, quarry
tantalum to Adam’s glory.

The brick is broken, and the sheet’s
the flag above the golden street
where crawling heard the upward calls;
where mornings rise and darkness falls.

29. “Texas Moon” by Peyton Morgan.
Reserved by artist Jeni Tomlinson.

Texas Moon

The Texas Moon
Shines brighter than the rest

Campfires are started
Guitars play a catchy tune

A man in a deep voice starts to sing
Cowboy boots tap along

It gets late, music slows
Stories are told of ancestors long ago

Riding horses in the heat
Natives shooting bows for meat

Mexican troops fight wars
That almost took Texas’s joy

Year after year, day after day
Through stories passed down to you and me
Standing here today

30. “Harbinger of Happiness” by Phyllis Dunn. Reserved by artist Gavin Kidd Fantoli.

Harbinger of Happiness

A bright balloon bouquet
Bouncing cloud of fun.
A celebration’s on its way.
A victory’s been won.
It’s someone’s special day,
Or a big job is done.

Floating faceted jewel
Foretell future festivities.
Joyfulness will rule
With plenty of activities.
There’ll be something sweet.
Probably cake.
You’ll overeat.
But that’s a risk you’ll take.

A riotous rising rainbow
Tied down with strings.
Reminds me when I’m feeling low
Enjoy the little things
A happy moment and when it’s done
Even popping balloons is fun!

31. “Hero Within” by Alice Parker. Reserved by artist Sumeet Mehta.

HERO WITHIN

Discover the hero within, accept you’re capable
of being a hero, beyond the normal person. Your
physical and spiritual communicating, taking on
your responsibility to sacrifice for a great idea.

Every culture and person has their trials, on their
journey for transformation of consciousness, to
their powers of life. Serendipity plays its part.
Every step readies you for your ascent-decision.

Listen to your voice inside. Your intuition speaks.
Live life in integrity, your soul’s highest vision.
Your invisible plane, supports your visible plane.
Dance, the soul’s true art, revelling its motion.

Never forget, God’s center everywhere within,
everyone releasing their hero, from within them.
You take care of yourself, keeping your well
full, helping others even unknown, around you.

Problems only exist when we give them power
through a diverted focus. Shift your attention
from what’s wrong, to what positive you create.

Freedom comes, as your master-mind sculpts
your every experience, shaped wisely. Your
challenges become opportunities for growth.

32. “Children of my Soul” by Neeta Nayak.
Reserved by artist Karren Case.

Children of my Soul
“The body may wrinkle, but the twinkling soul is ageless”

Twinkle, twinkle, my quiet little child,
How I wonder where you reside?
Deep inside my aging body so wide,
Like a tough diamond taking every passing year in stride.

When the blazing youth is gone,
When creaking joints toot their loud horn,
Then my inner child shows her calming light—
Twinkle, twinkle in the dark, dreary night.

My “outer” child is lost in time,
Aging organs are beyond prime;
Mother Nature to my body is not kind,
But that “inner” child guides my soul and mind.

It’s my outer child the world can see—
Eighteen or eighty, my age is part of me.
Fuller and duller it might grow in dark,
But inside, I lose not a single spark.

As I shut my eyes, I hear and see
Poet Jane Taylor’s nursery rhyme in wistful glee—
The melody of “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star” singing in me;
My inner and outer children are joyfully free!

33. “I Stare at the Mountains” by Nancy Gilbert. Reserved by artist Cortney Baker.

I STARE AT THE MOUNTAINS

I stare at the mountains
And wonder what they went through
To keep standing.
I see the beauty of the cactus flower
and lights of the city filled with my secrets.
My mind travels down the long street where I lived.
I smell the aroma of pies, cakes, and my sister’s perfume.
I see the morning glories planted by our neighbors.
I feel the love of my grandparents and
Wish I could hug them one last time.
My father was as strong as the mountains.
My mother as troubled as the deepest valley.
My sister was the cactus flower,
The flower that blossomed in the strongest of heat.
I draw from my past to help the future,
So the mountains will continue to stand.
I stare at the mountains of El Paso,
And then,
I move on.

34. “Winter’s Travesty” by Toni Andrukaitis. Reserved by artist Sherri Murphy.

Winter’s Travesty

The chill of Winter's travesty
With barren landscape chides
Then welcomes Spring's sweet majesty
Where soft green growth abides

Now hasten into Summer's scorch
Warm sultry melted nights
Paint brilliant bursts of Autumn's torch
Each leaf and limb ignites

From frozen time to earth's reprieve
Sweet robin's songs declare
The proof for those who now believe
We bow our heads in prayer.

35. “Color It Beautiful” by Brian Cummings. Reserved by artist Lynn Martin.

Color It Beautiful

Mostly, we agree on beauty—
vaulted, endless skies,
fierce green forests,
blazing, vermilion sunsets,
dappled fields of wistful wildflowers.

But what if our eyes were different,
and we saw through a veil of twilight hues?
Azure skies were umber,
emerald leaves turned sepia,
rosy dusks were tawny twilight,
wildflowers were variegated shades of brown

Would it change our perception of beauty,
or the poetry it drives?

Could we find splendor in sepia tones?
Could we smile
at chestnut skies dotted with golden clouds,
at forests carpeted with beige and umber,
at fading auburn sunsets,
at yellow-flecked fields of wistful russet wildflowers?

Perhaps vibrancy and gloom
would shift like sand beneath the tide,
creating new landscapes in our minds.

36. “Lighthouse” by Kavya Baburaj.
Reserved by artist Chris Alcott.

Lighthouse

My heart is not a waiting room,
not a lighthouse for the lost.
It is an ocean, vast and wild,
pulling with tides of my own making.

I will not stay where I am not seen,
where my giving is a given,
where they sip from my well
but never wonder if I thirst.

No, I am not a lesson in patience.
I am a lesson in leaving,
in knowing when a heart this big
deserves to beat elsewhere.

37. “Simply a Flower” by Shiny Wu. Reserved by artist Linda Katz.

Simply a Flower

So many flowers
and still simply a flower

Extraordinary blooms
and yet just a bloom

A hue of f l o w e r s
Spinning Dissolving
in Black Theater
on White Canvas
My Stage

All night
I dance the bloom
I paint its breath
Depart Melt Gone

All night I move
Into petals my step
Into the stroke tip my toe
I leave the dark in the corner
No way to move
A pause
as a symbol of sadness still

Bloom in joy
Bloom in death
Bloom in your arms
I burn

38. “The Artist” by Janet Tyner. Reserved by artist Melinda Whitten.

The Artist

That morning, after soaking bands of rain,
I stepped alone into a fresh-washed land.
Although the sky was covered with gray clouds,
an unseen sun still cast an ambient glow—
enough to luminesce scattered algae,
pale green against the trees’ rain-darkened bark.
A scent of earthy richness filled my breath
where yellow coreopsis hung their heads.
Just then a sunbeam broke the overcast
and touched cerise rose petals and a bee.
Before my eyes, the sun transformed the scene:
pink rose, translucent now, a stained-glass pane;
veined wings a crystalline bejeweled pin.
The might of daylight granted this to me—
a gift of beauty, sun-made artistry.

39. “Winter Sabbath” by Carol Thompson. Reserved by artist Heidi Kidd.

Winter Sabbath

I welcome winter, settle in
like a dormant plant communing
with earth beneath the straw-colored grass.
I praise the shorter, darker months,
hours crisscrossed with pale, sun-washed rays.

The world, visible in this season of naked trees,
dresses in earth tones, sages and grey plaids
woven within these sheltering days
of ordained rest,
a haven for my spirit.

Cold winds blow leaves the color of toast,
brittle and crumbling, up against the front door
to gather in crackling piles
awaiting a clean sweep of the broom,
the clean threshold revered by my German parents.

The iron bottle tree, a vibrant explosion
of orange and blue glass, dazzles like a bellwether
in the sun, as faded hydrangeas bow their heads
in expectation of verdant green, the advent
proclaiming earth’s next season.

40. “Green Grapes” by Beth Ayers. Reserved by artist Ryan Bledsoe.

Green Grapes

Pecan leaves filtered sunlight
streaming through windows to the west
highlighting the gray haired woman, sitting,
bent in concentration, hands slowly pressing fabric
beyond the rise and fall of the needle as heavy black shoes
move in time with the rise and fall of the pedal,
driving the motion, sewing a seam.

She paused, sensing my presence.
Perhaps the tap of black patent leather on hardwood floors
gave me away, prompted her attention, her call for me
to come closer to comment on her choice of cloth
as she gathered and shifted it to reveal a small drawer,
slightly open. Her encouragement sent my tiny hand
reaching to open a wider crack, to discover hidden treasure.

Did she see disappointment in my eyes?
My only experience told me those green grapes
held no value. Scuppernongs grew wild on the back fence,
made my mouth shrivel and spit, offered no enticement,
made me reject those perfect green globes
until her affirmation of delight pulled my fingers forward
to pluck a single grape.

Still, with hesitation, I pierced the peel with first teeth,
Releasing a burst of joy to tickle my tongue,
To make me think twice about first perceptions.

41. “The Greatest” by Yolanda Mosely.

The Greatest

An achievement will never be
Freely given on a golden platter.
But you must chase it.
As if it is your last day on earth.
Earn it like an Olympian that strives for the medal.
Just know that the greatest
Is to believe in you.
Then aim for the unimaginable.

42. “A Wish for Flowers” by Susan Mardele. Reserved by artist Michele Hart.

A Wish for Flowers

I’m a fairy, said she.
I see that, said I.

I grant wishes, said she.
That’s what fairies do, said I.

Your wish today is for flowers, said she.
Oh, is it? Said I.

Yes! Said she,
and off she tripped to her next client

Wings on elastic straps
flopping loosely down her back.

I continued on my neighborhood walk.
ruminating on all things adult.

But this morning I kept getting distracted…

By electric purple salvia spires here,
coral cannas there,

Magenta hibiscus to the right,
bright pink echinacea to the left.

Back home again, the gladiolas in my front garden
had just burst into full-blown bloom.

I guess fairies really do exist.
I saw one just this morning,
and she granted me a wish.

43. “Walking in Forest on Winter Eve” by Carl Reinelt.
Reserved by artist Heather McEnroe.

Walking in Forest on Winter Eve

Delicate crunch of
crinoline dust bathes this
forest nocturnal white,

descending to water’s edge,
as whitetails snort and breathe,
hooves piercing the crested snow.

Save for gossamer fallen
flakes, my senses turn
to silent whispers

through the limbs,
of frosted sighs upon my nose,
the cleansing snow of

no regrets, gratitude for
the frozen nip of
frost upon my fingertips.

In bite of winter’s
blushing mist, I take my
leave with blessing prayer,

a moment for a melting
kiss, in faith of finding you
always there.

44. “Your Foreverland” by Lori Hawk Fyfe.

Your Foreverland

Like Peter Pan and his shadow, when I look at you
I see your childhood face, my little imp,
just over your shoulder.
Your green eyes always shone so bright with love and joy.
But today there is pain, disappointment in adult love.
You held yourself and her to a higher set of standards.
Her small dark hand in your large white palm.
You counted on her faith in your Lord to match yours.
Your eyes wide open to a world that can be cruel and judgmental.
She's a preacher's daughter with motherhood in her dreams, or so she said.
But when you heard whispers of maybe that wasn't just so,
your heart stopped, and your anger took hold.
Anger is easier than pain. Now I see the pain.
Was it lies and deceit or just an immature woman of 21 thinking,
she found a good one, and there are so few good men!
Unfortunately you learned how not to be a father,
from your own biological father.
So as a child you sought shelter in the shadows and warmth
of your grandfather and step-father.
Now you are torn. What's true and what's just
a pretty smile beneath eyelashes?
Are those photos and memories she posted because she's
of the tik tok and facebook generation?
Post an image, even if everything underneath is just
a fabrication ready to crumble?
I recall you and your brothers holding your thumbs up to the moon,
two stars to the left to Neverland!
If only life was like that but pixie dust turns into saw dust,
and life can fall apart quickly.
There aren't many men like you my son, believers, family men, faithful and true.
Look through your own eyes and truths.
A small hand in your large palm, a love that is real. You will find her.
Up to the left of the moon, two stars over, your foreverland.

45. “Tired Carrots” by Sawalynn Mehta.

Tired Carrots take the blame,
But no one knew who to name.

Someone broke mom’s favorite vase,
But dad’s gonna solve the case.

He looked everywhere but found no trace,
Everything looked exactly the same.

So he decided to search the way it came,
Everyone thought the vase was lame.

So no one cared about its place,
Everyone kept a straight face.

But dad was running out of pace,
this turned into an impossible game,
Finding who did it is gonna be a shame.

48. “The Bill Of Rights” by Irene Robertson.

The Bill Of Rights

Ten written guidance of freedom
Passed from generation to generation

Numerous souls paid their life for it
Naysayers, disdained rules and regulations
ferociously—yet defeated

Civil Liberties—
Thriving, strong, even today.

Freedoms all of us enjoy—Freedom of speech, press,
Religion, and to protest. Freedom protecting rights to
Bear arms. Freedom preventing government allowing
soldiers to use homes of private citizens. Freedom from
Government's unreasonable search and seizure
Freedom Rights in criminal cases. Freedom and Right
To a fair trial, Freesom and Rights in civil cases
Freedom and rights to bar excessive bail and fines,
Cruel and unusual punishment. Freedom for other
Rights unwritten. Freedom says Federal Government
Only has those powers delegated in the constitution,
Others unlisted, belongs to states or the people.

And one wonders why everyone on earth
Viciously desires to plant foot in American soil?

49. “Against the White Snow” by Catherine L’Herisson.

Against the White of Snow

Against the white of snow,
I threw some grain and bread.
I saw a jet-black crow.

So deep, nothing could grow,
birds flew in to be fed
against the white of snow.

Then out stepped a shy doe
and buck, antlers on head.
I saw a jet-black crow.

A man approached real slow.
I was afraid of red
against the white of snow.

I felt a sense of woe.
Stay quiet, the hunter said.
I saw a jet-black crow.

A caw made the deer go.
He shot the bird instead.
Against the white of snow,
I saw a jet-black crow.

50. "Torch Singer: Shades of Rose" by Doris Brogan.

Torch Singer: Shades of Rose

Love empowered pain devours
soul and sense and sanity.
“Lordy mercy, mercy please,” she pleads.
“Deliver me from the same old honey-coated lies
that sing the same intoxicated lullabies.”

Bitter lips twist with disappointment
as the sparkle leaks from her eyes
to leave mascara streaks on cheeks
whose blooms have been picked and pressed
between the pages of experience.

Love empowered pain devours
soul and sense and sanity.
“Lordy mercy, mercy please,” she pleads.
“Deliver me from the same old honey-coated lies
that sing the same intoxicated lullabies.”

Shades of Rose exposed to darkness
tend to blur and blend, degrees of grayness
settle over bolder tones until her life becomes
the sum and substance of the burned-out ash
that falls from the end of her cigarette.

Love empowered pain devours
soul and sense and sanity.
“Lordy mercy, mercy please,” she pleads.
“Mercy please, deliver me.”

51. "Reminiscing..." by Sylvia Medel. Reserved by artist Carol Kovacs.

Reminiscing . . .

That spring after graduating from college,
how delighted I was when my grandparents
asked me to stay with them in their cottage
in the Valley by the town's mountain river,
where the music comes from the ripples
of the water and the hymnal voices of
the birds floating in the breeze.

That first night, I wondered if my eyes
could ever close when my ears listened
to the night rain falling, the frogs endlessly croaking,
and the big trees couldn't stop talking to each other.
The Valley never slept. But I finally did.
The fragrant scent woke me up, tip-toed to my bedroom.
Opening the window, sunlight kissed my face.

Oh, silky white and dainty Jasmine blooms beneath
the window. Lo, Jasmine bushes planted around
the cottage, beaming with flowers. A tall bush let climb up
a pencil-like coconut tree whose outstanding height
defies the claws of adverse weathers alike hurricanes.
And gifted by nature this pencil-like coconut tree can dance,
swaying with the tune of the fiercest wind. I'm enthralled!

Dear Jasmines, your beauty and fragrance truly delight me.
Where you are, what a gorgeous place to go back to and away!

52. "RAINBOW" by Brian Bowles. Reserved by artist Sue Colton.

RAINBOW

The couple named their baby girl Beaux
She was their one and only child
Her presence always made them glow
When they saw her, their faces smiled

When rainbows appeared it thrilled Beaux
Rainbows were what she loved the best
When rain came, she looked for a rainbow
Finding rainbows was her favorite quest

Rainbow colors decorated Beaux's room
Stories about rainbows were her favorites to hear
Every Halloween she wore a rainbow costume
Rainbow jewelry also brought her cheer

Sadly, her parent's world was suddenly shattered
Little Beaux died tragically when hit by a car
Her funeral day was gloomy to all that gathered
Dark clouds fittingly filled the sky near and far

In the cemetery grief and despair freely flowed
Not one mourner kept a tearless eye
Afterwards, the parents drove out the long cemetery road
They saw prismatic colors arcing from clouds in the sky

53. "Lighting the Spark of Imagination" by Becca Ikle.

Lighting the Spark of Imagination

Be the change in the world
Help those in need
Be the light in the darkness
Take charge and lead

Set your ideas ablaze
Watch them sputter and spark alive
Never knowing what might come if you just believe inside

It may take time, but don’t lose heart
It usually takes a while to start

Creativity, problem solving and imagination
Building blocks of a vision

Seeing people, places, and things that are inspiring
Never a dull moment when creating a masterpiece

54. "Serendipity in Brownian Motion" By Lavanya Acharya.

Serendipity in Brownian Motion

Why else would I be alive than to witness:
my light mixing with your light
as we swirl through the cauldron of life?

—“Look! A double rainbow!" you said me,
one stranger to another on Venice boulevard:
you going West, and I walking East
on a strange road, in a strange land.
A double-rainbow-colored blossom of comfort
is now forever a part of me.

Why else would I be alive than to dance
with you, my companions, hand-in-hand,
for a moment, a lifetime, or, anything in between.
Spinning as we learn the patterns to the knots
that tie us together for love, and longing,
for anger, resentment, and sorrow,
for kindness, gratitude and, forgiveness.

Why else would I be alive
than to watch my own light
grow and change, dim and brighten,
as I circle the sun again, and again,
swept into an interweaving dance
with you by my side.

55. "AND ALL *THAT* JAZZ" By Jim Boone.

AND ALL *THAT* JAZZ

Life is a MASQUERADE
ole chum
Especially when
we live IT to the
Fullest in a 'misfit'
sort of way

Hey, whether it's to a
bongo beat
or a strum-and-glide
on harp-strings

the soundtrack
for a life fully lived
must include
gifted fingers 'tickling'
or happily playing,
pounding or gliding
across the ivories;
a guitar
getting JAZZY
to the sultry, seductive,
sounds cruising from
a SAX-o-phone

"Won't you take a
little time out w/me"
JAZZ memories
of the Senior
Master Class

"And I say to myself
what a wonderful world"

Brubeck, Ella, Maye,
Louis Armstrong and
All that Jazz ! ! !

56. "Stories: A Reverie" By Lopamudra Banerjee.

Stories of a chunk of quivering fall air
Stories of crinkled bodies and warrior hearts
And the epic tales of foremothers
in our slivered tongues.

Stories of forbidden evening smells
Hovering in our breath, the resounding
of panting noises of fleeing territories
Through the thorns of barbed-wire fences.

Stories of soaking our tattered alphabets
in our bloodstream, grilling our ancestors' breaths
in the blistering heat of our hearths, stories that sprout
from the love of piercing, ill-nurtured closures.

Stories of our subaltern realities and mangled memories
Stories of our myths that shape our smoldering fire,
Stories like these live and breathe in our contours,
In our quiet rivers, their sudden undulations.

Stories of womanhood and its myriad travails
Stories flowing like gushing cascade
in my veins, in my bloodstream
Ushering from the birth canal of my consciousness.

57. "SEEING IS BELIEVING" By Elizabeth Riddle. Reserved by artist Pernie Fallon.

SEEING IS BELIEVING

To the thought "I'll believe it when I see it"
Ponder a much different way of approach
Like SOUL supercedes over underlying love
We feel even though can't tangibly touch
When a tree falls crashing to its forest floor
If eyes not there, still nature is its witness
Our physical bodies limit where each are for
But with heart view boundless beauty hidden
Like precious art covered under coat of paint
Elaborate ceiling unexposed under drywall
Shooting stars in atmosphere and contrails
In infinite sky above through galaxies across
Faces of loved ones in the clouds are there
Softly subtle and can be found everywhere
Bright yellow from removed chlorophyll green
Single leaf that drifts on air to lay at my feet
Magical wonder of Rainbow that is rare to be
Still connects all of us behind the scenes
Rather than waiting to see to say that believe
If you believe with faith then will always see