



Battery Park City Authority

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BATTERY PARK CITY AUTHORITY CELEBRATES NATIONAL POETRY MONTH WITH “RAINING POETRY IN BPC”

Partnership with Poets House and Local Educational Institutions to Run During Warm-Weather Months in More than a Dozen Public Spaces Across Battery Park City

The Battery Park City Authority (BPCA) today announced the launch of *Raining Poetry in BPC*, a temporary public art project that on rainy days will display excerpts of poetry on the paths, plazas, and sidewalks of Battery Park City. Portions of nine popular poems by luminaries such as United States Poet Laureate and Pulitzer Prize winner Tracy K. Smith, Langston Hughes, Sylvia Plath, and others are being stenciled on hard surfaces [across the neighborhood](#) this week, and will begin appearing for view with the next rainfall. These poems will be joined by those penned by local school children that first appeared last summer, and which will be reproduced as part of this initiative.

“Battery Park City is filled with enchantment that this poetry helps capture,” said **BPCA President & Chief Operating Officer B.J. Jones**. “Since Battery Park City’s creation, public art has played an integral role in the character of our neighborhood. *Raining Poetry in BPC* is a welcome new chapter in that tradition – and a better reason than dodging puddles to look down during April showers!

Inspired by an initiative of the same name first launched in the City of Boston, *Raining Poetry* seeks to bring poetry into the public sphere where people can encounter verse in their everyday lives. This local iteration is a collaboration with Poets House, a 70,000-volume open-stack poetry library located in Battery Park City’s north neighborhood. Now celebrating its 30th anniversary as one of lower Manhattan’s great cultural institutions, Poets House documents the wealth and diversity of modern poetry and stimulates public dialogue on issues of poetry in culture.

“Serendipitous encounters with poems are made easy with the model developed by Mass Poetry in Boston” said **Abby Ehrlich, BPCA Director of Community Partnerships and Engagement**. “Poetry appeals in part because it changes with the times and has few fixed rules. It enriches experiences – a young P.S. 89 student in ‘My Old Moon,’ for example, who remarks on the great sight of bright moonlight in the park but also misses the moonlight in the town he left. At its best, poetry is a companion and has the ability to connect us.”

“We celebrate poetry year-round at Poets House, the nation’s poetry library, and so we are thrilled that the Battery Park City Authority has created these unexpected encounters with poetry and our neighborhood parks, inviting fresh discovery of our city and our shared humanity,” says **Poets House Executive Director Lee Briccetti**.

Also serving as downtown poetry advisor was Kelly Sullivan, Visiting Assistant Professor, New York University, Irish Studies, Glucksman Ireland House. BPCA also consulted “Dream In Color,” a resource guide for educators edited by Maya Angelou, in choosing poems for inclusion in the project.

The *Raining Poetry* Project includes excerpts from the following poems:

- “Testimonial” by Rita Dove
- “Tula [Books are door-shaped]” by Margarita Engle
- “This Poem” by Vona Groarke
- “Snail” & “To You” by Langston Hughes
- “Strolling” by Angela Jackson
- “Seed” by Paula Meehan
- “Blackberrying” by Sylvia Plath
- “My God, It’s Full of Stars” by Tracy K. Smith

Also part of *Raining Poetry in BPC* are the works of local students from two Battery Park City-based elementary schools – P.S. 276 and P.S. 89 – as well as from P.S. 1 in Chinatown, which initially appeared during the summer of 2017.

“Every time I walk out of or into our building on a rainy day, my heart is warmed by the poetry stenciled on the ground by our students,” said **Terri Ruyter, Principal, PS/IS 276, The Battery Park City School**. “We even included a picture of it on the cover of our family and staff handbooks this year!”

Poem excerpts will be installed using biodegradable, water-repellant spray on stencils with letters approximately two inches tall. Then, on rainy days throughout the spring, summer, and fall, poem excerpts will be found at the following Battery Park City locations:

- Chambers Street in front of Stuyvesant High School
- P.S. / I.S. 276 on Battery Place
- P.S. 89 / I.S. 289 on Warren Street
- Children’s Garden at Rockefeller Park
- Battery Park City Library on North End Avenue
- Poets House on River Terrace
- Teardrop Park South
- Irish Hunger Memorial Plaza
- Brookfield Place / Battery Park City Ferry Terminal
- Belvedere Plaza near *Pylons*
- Vesey Street Crosswalk at North End Avenue
- Liberty Street Crosswalk near West Street
- Murray Street Crosswalk near West Street
- Walkway between Rector Park East and West Thames Park
- Pier A Plaza

Concluded **BPCA President & COO Jones**: “We have several extraordinary partners to thank – from our local schools to Poets House, NYU, and to our incredible staff who are always looking for ways to make this neighborhood even more magical. On behalf of all us here at Battery Park City: Come for the poetry, stay to enjoy a neighborhood that’s second-to-none.”

About BPCA: Established in 1968, The Hugh L. Carey Battery Park City Authority is a New York State Public Benefit Corporation charged with developing and maintaining a well-balanced community on the Lower West Side of Manhattan. Battery Park City’s 92-acre site has achieved worldwide acclaim as a model for community renewal in planning, creating, and maintaining a balance of commercial, residential, retail and park space.

For more info visit: bpca.ny.gov.