
THE

PRINCETON FESTIVAL

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princetonsymphony.org/festival

Calling All Poets!

The Princeton Festival, Princeton Symphony Orchestra's summer performing arts extravaganza, is mounting Derrick Wang's opera *Scalia/Ginsburg*, which tells the story of the unlikely friendship of two U.S. Supreme Court justices. As part of the June 2022 Festival, we invite writers from across New Jersey to create poetry which explores themes presented in the opera. Participants and their works will be featured at two free events:

Saturday, June 18

Just Poetry: Workshop at 12:30pm

Just Poetry: Readings at 3pm

Morven Museum & Garden's Stockton Education Center

55 Stockton Street, Princeton, NJ

Both events are moderated by resident poet [Nicole Homer](#). Bring your poetry to the workshop and receive first-hand critique in a guided poetry masterclass. After the workshop, stay and read your poetry aloud at the poetry reading!


This year's poetry themes include:

- Unlikely Friendships
- Dissent
- Feminism

Get Started: Choose a theme you are interested in and explore our website at <https://princetonsymphony.org/events/calling-all-poets> to learn more about how composer Derrick Wang brought these themes to life onstage. Listen, get inspired, be creative, and follow your instincts! Once you have a theme in mind, you can use one of these three formats to help you bring your work to life:

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A) Concrete Poetry

Concrete Poetry, or shape poetry, is poetry that doesn't follow a traditional layout, but instead reflects its theme visually. For example, if you chose "Dissent" as your theme, you might create a poem in the shape of a no entry sign: . Below is an example of a poem about the sounds of the city, and the poet has shaped the words to create a speaker.

Erika Métiévier

As
goes
awakes
light with
sky scrapers
song. Twirling
melody, streets make beats
steps of excited feet. Sound
as music embodies the city
vibrant sound humming to
young fluttering hearts and
steadfast insomniacs, using
ears, and stomping noise to
thought. Nightbirds fiddle a
sway their soft
of the gentle
is luscious
a divine
with
It

this jungle
to sleep it
in a new
dancing stars and
echoing the night
breezes create a
to the rhythmic
pulses through tall walls
tonight. Music is the city, a
sleepy children, arousing
inflated desires, irritating
charm to seduce innocent
disturb conflicted minds in
folksy tune while trees
limbs to lullabies
wind's cry. This city
musical waves,
location
a voice.
is magical.

...Continued

B) Erasure Poetry*

Erasure Poetry is poetry created from an existing text. Choose from four provided speeches given by Ruth Bader Ginsburg (inspiration for one of the star characters of the *Scalia/Ginsburg* opera), or choose your own passages from writings from either of the justices. On the left side, the reader may see the original text (you'll want to keep that untouched) while the right side is for the poet's response. You can use any method to remove the words—whiteout, blackout, or cover them in a colorful, creative way using a variety of “out-of-the-box” techniques and materials! (Scroll down for all Ginsburg text options.) Below is an example:

Ruth Bader Ginsburg
Supreme Court of the United States
Remarks for Wheaton College Commencement: May 17, 1997

...I will confess that Marty and I have survived nearly 43 years in each other's constant company because of advice given to me by his mother on our wedding day. This was her prescription for a happy, enduring marriage: "It pays," she said, "it pays sometimes to be a little deaf." I have followed that advice—with only occasional lapses—not only at home, but in the places I have worked, even in relating to my current colleagues at the Supreme Court. It is important to be a good listener if you are to work with other effectively, but it also pays, sometimes, to be a little deaf—for example, when a colleague or commentator writes than an opinion on which you labored endless hours, worrying over every word, is "simply irresponsible," "sloppy," "strange," or "profoundly misguided." (I am not making those up). My mother had a similar idea in mind when she admonished me, constantly once I reached my teens: "Be a lady!" To her, the term "great lady" was a most honorable one. It meant hold fast to your convictions and self-respect, be a good teacher, but don't snap back in anger. Anger, resentment, indulgence in recriminations waste time and sap energy. In the same vein, one of my D.C. Circuit colleagues, the Honorable Edward A. Tamm, counseled me when I was new on that court: "Do the very best job you can in each case, but when the job is done, don't look back, don't worry over finished work, go on to the next challenge and give it your all." I have been heartened by the ever growing appreciation of what feminism really means. It means freeing people, men as well as women, to be you and me, allowing people to pursue the talents and qualities they have without artificial restraints. The idea of feminism I hold high was put in this fitting way by a D.C.-area suffragist, Lydia Pearsall, whose life spanned more than a century: "I never wanted to become a man," she said, "just his equal, and in the process, it seemed to me we would both become a little better." Last year, my grand colleague, Sandra Day O'Connor, first and for twelve years sole woman on the Supreme Court, made a surprise appearance one night in the D.C. Shakespeare Theatre's production of *Henry V*. She played the role of Isabella, Queen of France, and spoke the famous line: "Happily a woman's voice may do some good." Indeed it may.

enduring
in
places in
hours
in mind
hold to
counsel
heartened
to be you to pursue
become just equal,
voice Indeed a woman's

C) Free Response

You can also respond with no boundaries. Choose a theme from the three concepts and let your imagination move you to create poetry that reflects these ideas. Format it however you wish—get inspired by music, opera, art, and let your creativity flow!

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***Erasure Poetry sample texts:**

Text 1:

Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Supreme Court of the United States
Remarks for Wheaton College Commencement, May 17, 1997

...But I ask your patience, not too many minutes more, so that I may convey to you my idea of what it means to be, as I am, a feminist. I had the good fortune to be alive and a lawyer in the late 1960s when, for the first time in history, it became possible to urge before courts, successfully, that society would benefit enormously if women were regarded as persons equal in stature to men. At my own college graduation, in 1954, it was widely thought that women were not suited for many of life's occupations... So much has changed for the good since then. But there are still too many people who regard feminism as a threat, people who are discomfited by the very word...I have been heartened by the ever growing appreciation of what feminism really means. It means freeing people, men as well as women, to be you and me, allowing people to pursue the talents and qualities they have without artificial restraints. The idea of feminism I hold high was put in this fitting way by a D.C.-area suffragist, Lydia Pearsall, whose life spanned more than a century: "I never wanted to become a man," she said, "just his equal, and in the process, it seemed to me we would both become a little better." Two weeks ago, at the celebration of the reopening of the renovated Library of Congress Jefferson Building, a college student came up to my table and asked if I could help with an assignment. She had one question and hoped to compose a paper by asking diverse people to respond. What, she asked, did I think was the largest problem for the next century. My mind raced past privacy concern in the electronic age, assisted suicide, deadly weapons, outer space. I thought of Helen Suzman's "chattering," of Thurgood Marshall's praise of the evolution of the concept, *We, the People*, to include once excluded, ignored, or undervalued people, then of our nation's motto: *E Pluribus Unum*, of many, one. The challenge is to make and keep our communities places where we can tolerate, even celebrate, our differences, while pulling together for the common good. "Of many, one" is the main challenge, I believe, and my hope for our country and the world.

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Text 2:

Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Supreme Court of the United States
Remarks for Wheaton College Commencement, May 17, 1997

Almost everyday, because of the good job in which fortune, the President, and Congress have placed me, I receive request letters from people across the country. Some want my autograph (and thank you, not with an autopen), others want something I have worn (old shoes, most often). Still others seek words of advice or encouragement. My current answer: In the open society that is the American ideal, no doors should be closed to people willing to spend the hours of effort needed to make dreams come true. So hold fast to your dreams, and work hard to make them a reality. And as you pursue your paths in life, leave tracks. Just as others have been way pavers for your aspirations and achievements, so you should aid those who will follow in your way. Think of your parents and teachers, of their efforts and hopes for you, then of your children and even grandchildren, of the world they will inhabit. Do your part to help move society to the place you would like it to be for the health and well-being of generations following your own. On the Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashana, this prayer is recited: Birth is a beginning, And death a destination. And life is a journey: From ignorance to knowing; From foolishness to discretion. And then, perhaps, to wisdom. Your parents and teachers have helped to launch you securely on life's journey. May you continue on course, learning and knowing ever more. And may you gain satisfaction, pleasure, and wisdom as you proceed along the way.

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Text 3:

Brief for the Appellant, Reed v. Reed, 404 US 71 (1971)

In very recent years, a new appreciation of women's place has been generated in the United States. Activated by feminists of both sexes, courts and legislatures have begun to recognize the claim of women to full membership in the class "persons" entitled to due process guarantees of life and liberty and the equal protection of the laws. But the distance to equal opportunity for women--in the face of the pervasive social, cultural, and legal roots of sex-based discrimination--remains considerable. In the absence of a firm constitutional foundation for equal treatment of men and women by the law, women seeking to be judged on their individual merits will continue to encounter law-sanctioned obstacles...The experience of trying to root out racial discrimination in the United States has demonstrated that even when the arsenal of legislative and judicial remedies is well stocked, social and cultural institutions shaped by centuries of law sanctioned bias do not crumble under the weight of legal pronouncements proscribing discrimination. Thus...sex based discrimination will not disintegrate upon this Court's recognition that sex is a suspect classification. But without this recognition, the struggle for an end to sex-based discrimination will extend well beyond the current period in time... To eliminate women who share an eligibility category with a man, when there is no basis in fact to assume that women are less competent to administer than are men, is patently unreasonable and constitutionally impermissible. A woman's right to equal treatment may not be sacrificed to expediency.

Text 4:

Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Supreme Court of the United States
Remarks for Wheaton College Commencement, May 17, 1997

...I will confess that Marty and I have survived nearly 43 years in each other's constant company because of advice given to me by his mother on our wedding day. This was her prescription for a happy, enduring marriage: "It pays," she said, "it pays sometimes to be a little deaf." I have followed that advice--with only occasional lapses--not only at home, but in the places I have worked, even in relating to my current colleagues at the Supreme Court. It is important to be a good listener if you are to work with others effectively, but it also pays, sometimes, to be a little deaf--for example, when a colleague or commentator writes that an opinion on which you labored endless hours, worrying over every word, is "simply irresponsible," "sloppy," "strange," or "profoundly misguided." (I am not making those up). My mother had a similar idea in mind when she admonished me, constantly once I reached my teens: "Be a lady!" To her, the term "great lady" was a most honorable one. It meant hold fast to your convictions and self-respect, be a good teacher, but don't snap back in anger. Anger, resentment, indulgence in recriminations waste time and sap energy. In the same vein, one of my D.C. Circuit colleagues, the Honorable Edward A. Tamm, counseled me when I was new on that court: "Do the very best job you can in each case, but when the job is done,

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Bring your finished work on Saturday, June 18th and share your poetry at the Princeton Festival! RSVP Here: <https://forms.gle/uEJivHMXEviTSMpz7>



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