



# Library podcast

## The Poets Are In

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[00:00:31] Good afternoon. Welcome to the Seattle Public Library and the culminating event of Claudia Castro Luna's poet in residence as Seattle's first civic poet. She is also the first poet in residence and actually artist in residence who has worked across the entire library system. It's been a wonderful time for the library and I hope for Claudia to have us participate in this inaugural office and also for all of our. Patrons and people in the city to have an opportunity to work with her before I hand the mike over to Claudia. I just want to say again this was a first for the city. It was also a first for the library and Claudia went as some of the people in the audience know to branch libraries and worked on her residency called the poet is in. So we're looking forward to seeing the fruits of those efforts. And thank you so much for being here. Claudia

[00:02:08] Thank you Carletta for the introduction and thank you everyone for joining us today.

[00:02:13] We have a great afternoon of listening to pull poems written by folks from all corners of the city.

[00:02:23] Before I began Carletta I explained very well what my project was for the library and I wanted to thank the librarians that collaborated with me at the different branches. Jane Gibson at the Southwest branch. Molly Humphrey at Lake View Kelli Koon. Douglas Truth. Mary Teraces at Green Lake Ken Golesrode at High Point. Lupine Miller at South Park. Paige Chernov at University and Capital Hill branches. And of course Carletta here at the central branch. And really without her there's program could not have taken place. She has been instrumental in every single one of my appearances at the Central Library. Thank you so much for your work and enthusiasm. I also want to do think Davida Ingram who coordinates public programs for the library. And to Valerie Garrett Turner who was the first person who has this who had the idea to create this program and collaborate with the Office of Arts and Culture which houses the civic poet program and that's how this then came about the original thrust of this workshops was to share the power and beauty of poetry to discover something about ourselves and the place we live in. But in the process they also became points of connection of making community and above all of fostering creativity in each other

[00:04:00] Making art may come across as superfluous given the pressing issues of our city and country that we're living right now. But the light but the light art sheds over us the angles it presents the wonder it invites in both the reader and the viewer or listener or or viewer in the case of

[00:04:26] Paintings and sculptures. All these intangibles is what makes it vital and important and valuable. And I am full of gratitude to have made art with so many folks across the city. I wanted to say and they'll talk a little bit more. You saw in the slideshow that Carletta presented all the different libraries I was at. And in one of those libraries the Lake City branch the residency was very different because I worked at the farmer's market.

[00:04:59] I made points with people at the farmer's market it was a drop and very impromptu spur of the moment. Let's write poems together. And those are the poems that you see displayed. I have some more samples and I also worked in Spanish and in English with groups of seniors that use that use the library through a community center. So the library goes to the community center once a week and meets and brings books with seniors and it was during that time that then I was able to collaborate with them and I did it both in Spanish and in English. So that gives you kind of an idea of the range of the work I did and the readers today are people who came and sat with me and wrote poems at these various branches. And so I'll introduce I'll say a little bit about who they are and which branch they came to and then they'll read a poem for us. But before we do that it is my pleasure to introduce Angel Gardener who is serving as Seattle's Youth Poet Laureate.

[00:06:04] I've had the chance and honored to read with Angel at various other venues and I'm always so impressed and deeply touched by her poetry. Angel was born in Seattle and has been writing since the age of seven and you could tell that that is the case because it comes through in her writing. She says I have used poetry as a way to heal and express myself openly. We are very lucky to share her presence and craft with us this afternoon. Angel's first book is forthcoming summer 2017. Please help me welcome Angel Gardner

[00:06:48] Hello.

[00:06:51] The first piece I'm going to read is titled A few words to a racist America.

[00:06:58] We have been tainted and now we have been blamed for it.

[00:07:04] My black did not bleed into your white. Your white dove head first into my ancestors melanin.

[00:07:10] We have been tainted fuck.

[00:07:13] Make America Great Again. Let's make America honest for once. No more. Go back to your country bullshit.

[00:07:21] We know damn well that that whole continent has been whipped lynched and shipped our home will be wherever the hell we make it. We are son favored kinky haired pains and privileged asses we are locked elbows and tangled roots of Family Trees littered with softly swaying and strange fruit cinder blocks lined our backbones and iron coats the bottoms of our feet were black

[00:07:47] Of color you can hang that sign that reads no Negroes from the chip on your shoulders. If you feel the need and I'll make sure it's not dusty as I walk my black ass on by life has proven to be too short to avoid being risky.

[00:08:05] I am risky.

[00:08:07] We are risky. America fears minority but I am minority from the balls of my feet to the stubborn clench in my teeth. America put your star spangled shackles to my ankles and call me ignorant when I can't run from what's hunting me. To the gym Bay from my hips set fire to the Kinsey cloth outlining my lineage

[00:08:29] Be my body and downplay my determination. But I made up from the strength. The love blood and black of my ancestors.

[00:08:38] America will not change me.

[00:08:48] Thank you. All right. The final piece I'm going to read is called out where I reside. It's kind of my ode to Seattle. My city is a scandalous Beautiful Mind fuck full of cannabis craving lovers deserted and deranged teenagers and power hungry sharks drunk on their own egos I city is a simple as a multicolored labyrinth fingers green with envy pressing rubbing together demanding more when we've burned all that was left to give

[00:09:22] My city is twenty five different but perfect angles of fucked up full of big hearted foul mouthed individuals my city is as contradicting as it is tall and wide but I shed blood on this pavement I made home on this pavement and I cried out to that skyline.

[00:09:42] The city is mine. Not quite how I like but it's where I reside. Thank you

[00:09:57] Thank you so much Angel I love that poem that ode to Seattle and actually all of the poems today are in ways songs to Seattle. The library commissioned me to write three poems for during my tenure as civic poet and that will read them today for the first time and as I composed them. They ended up in one way or another being poems about the library. So I've called them my library poems even though they're they're all in one way or another related to the library they're different in tone as you will see this one is titled poetics at the central branch 3 p.m. on a rainy Sunday afternoon poetry beckons on Ninth Floor stacks antiquities on the sixth bird law on the eighth

[00:10:53] In the children's section. Eager parents read to less eager toddlers and older kids haggle with each other for a computer turn. You'd think the whole city has come out seeking refuge from

turbulent skies. But even when Puget Sound dazzles midsummer blue and red geraniums cascade from flower baskets the length of First Avenue. For some the building is what beckons. Not the books like *The Man in shoes*. A few sizes too small shuffling toward third floor a green carpet or the woman in first floor bathroom washing her face pinning her hair back while three large lumps with handles wait like Haggard dogs at her feet. Library silence daughter too taciturn stacks offers respite to catch a nap to sew a patch of peace and safety into the asymmetrical quilt of bracing life. Homeless with or without a library card.

[00:12:08] So our next reader lives in South Seattle but came to the workshops in West Seattle. Irene Young

[00:12:21] Actually I've come across her. Our paths have crossed since then.

[00:12:26] She drove from Columbia City all the way to West Seattle to attend the workshops and she was dynamite she wrote all those amazing poems with such ease. And now I understand partly why she tells us that her grandfather self published a book of his poetry that my mom translates for me from Chinese to English welcome Irene.

[00:13:00] So like Claudia said I live in Rainier Beach and my housemates are here. So thanks guys for coming out. This poem was inspired right right before Claudia had sent out the call to write Seattle mount poems. I had begun exercising with a neighborhood friend in Rainier Beach. So this is placed in Rainier Beach. It's called the hill between us 50 7th Avenue South and Waters Avenue South we climb the hill on Wednesday mornings because we're less ambitious than on Mondays Mondays we loop Seward Park in the dark or mimic Jillian Michaels in my living room five times up. Makes for a healthy movement and five times down is good for chat. We've gotten closer. We recognize the lady who dresses in all red fake red flower in her hair. We say hello to the man who walks to the bus stop around 640 A.M. I try to take my turn walking on the side the bushes and shrubs over grow. You laugh at my attributing all aches and pains to dehydration from the street lamp at Rainier Avenue to the wire pole at Red Wing street. I tap each with my elbow like a schoolyard finish line back up for me to get ready for work back down. For you to your waking boys apart I look up and breathe in the cold air and anticipate lengthening days.

[00:14:43] Thank you so much Irene for that beautiful poem.

[00:14:47] Our next reader is Amy Albertson who's originally from the Midwest but moved to the Central District Nine years ago. Her favorite poets are Langston Hughes Maya Angelou and Sophia Henderson homes. She loves the way poetry is used to interpret connect with and withstand the world we live in. And Amy attended the workshops at the Douglas truth branch.

[00:15:14] Welcome Amy. So this is very short. My backyard. I smell the salt. Feel the damp. I step outside. Blooms in February January even still gray I see the squirrels not brown not red not black.

[00:15:41] Gray Gray like wolves gray like the sky gray like this city. We had a great talk about squirrels that afternoon when they me started working on that draft and just the way everything is imbued with Gray in Seattle and how you just learn to love it.

[00:16:10] Our next reader is a Seattle native. Margaret Barry. She's a writer and emerging poet who has read her work at writers read a Columbia library Onyx fine arts collective town hall and Elliot Bay bookstore.

[00:16:25] She lives in West Seattle with her husband Donald J. Barry. Margaret attended a workshop at the high point branch and came to the southwest branch workshops with your niece or neighbor I believe. Which was wonderful. And Margaret is also a member of the African-American writers alliance. Welcome Margaret.

[00:16:50] Thank you. Claudia Oh good. Everybody can hear me. First of all I have to say that I forgot to put something in my bio that I volunteer for the Seattle Public Libraries probably for the last six years at the highpoint branch in the book group. And I love reading books a lot. That said I'd like to share one of my two points with you and the first one is called Homeless.

[00:17:15] Actually it's not called homelessness is called south cap lawn and is about homelessness. One of our neighbors in the neighborhood

[00:17:25] Became homeless. It really came close to dawn and I really you know we're not. None of us are that far from being homeless right. Fortunately her her new dog have family in Florida. S cap long and those of you who are not familiar with West Seattle or cap lawn cap lawn is a 68 acre bird sanctuary and nature walks so ask cap lawn.

[00:17:57] This is s cap long.

ll

[00:18:00] Here I go blue my dog walk me down the alley I greet our neighbor and her rescue dog she tells me before she leaves you'll make more doggy treats lube loves her doggy treats Lou loves to eat her doggy treats Why are you going I. No job the tavern closed not hired the young and pretty get those roles she lost her home of 20 years Lou will miss her treats I won't miss our neighbor but the dogs where our sister lives will love her doggie treats. I see you have lots of people in the House how are you guys

[00:19:01] Doing. Where is this free time. Sun saying I'm ready for the Sun my next form is called Eastern crest in West Seattle.

[00:19:12] Like most of Seattle West Seattle has lots of hills and valleys and many views of the air traffic Eastern crest a burst of red orange and yellow first light and sight airplanes crows and eagles and flight and tree limbs swelling Red Buds seek the ripening sunlight in the gardens.

[00:19:44] Hella Boras and Daphne's bloom at Southwest Findlay street. Thank you

[00:20:00] Thank you Margaret. I know that Southwest Findlay street spot very well because I drive past it near the library one of the things I love about this poems all of the workshops were about writing place because

[00:20:17] I really wanted during my term a civic board to gather and collect plumes of the way we individually see the city.

[00:20:26] How do we each see the city.

[00:20:28] What is the map that we carry in our hearts and then to share that with with the general public with the other citizens that have you know that we'll be able to hear this in the podcast and that are here today. So thank you so much for that.

[00:20:45] I love it when I recognize myself or a place in the poems you were reading so our next reader is Lily Boundguard and I've had the pleasure of interacting with Lily in different environments. She's a student at Garfield High School and this year is a part of Seattle Arts and Lectures youth poet laureate cohort and last year was one of six high school students who participated in Jack Straw's Young Writers Series a jury that selection for Jack Straw and Lily's poems just shown right through the slush pile that I got. It was wonderful she was already writing about the city in the poems she submitted which always touches I have a soft spot for poems of place. So I was very pleased when I started doing the workshops here at the central library and in walked Lily with a group of her friends. So we get to hear her today.

[00:21:42] Welcome Lily.

[00:21:52] My poem is about Volunteer Park which is in Capitol Hill. I went to Bright Water school for elementary and we'd spend a lot of time there. Volunteer Park they say there's a giant squid in the reservoir that if you could climb the fence and stick your hand into the bright water and feel his slimy bodies swimming by yours and there's a giant bone in the park that kids say is the squid skeleton. But if you were to brush away the woodchips you'd see a placard and commemoration we'd slide down the soft curves and land on our knees letting the damp soak through our genes when it rained we would hide in trees and feel their cold bark beneath our toes. We'd laugh so loud that the sky would be scared of us and our umbrella laughter on snowy days we'd take cardboard for sleds and leave our scarves at home. They say when the reservoir FREEZES OVER THE SQUID still lives but only if you throw rocks over the fence and break holes in the white ice. For him to breathe through

[00:23:02] Thank you Lily.

[00:23:05] Next we have Carla Becker Carla Becker came from Capitol Hill to a workshop and the Southwest library branch in her own words. Carla tells us I find poetry very comforting a way of calming myself down when I need calming. This works when I read it and also when I write it poetry is therapy. Welcome Carla

[00:23:38] I wrote about one of my favorite places in Seattle the sculpture garden a silver tree beckons from its desolate plot a flotilla of ancient ships their rusted hulls plying garden Sands or weary waves migrating to a welcoming shore symphonies of shadows dance amongst the bulk of metal creating beauty of their own a poem of interpretation is up to us from the city's frantic commerce along a calming path a stand of quaking aspens arises so you know one of the interesting things that happened during these workshops is that some folks were lived in the neighborhood where the workshop took place so they would just walk up to their local library.

[00:24:45] Then there were folks who actually drove quite a bit to come at the University branch. I had people who had taken a couple of buses to get to. We were at the University branch and they were coming from South Park. That's quite a trek. On the bus and then I had folks who attended that particular workshop then show up at the high point library in West Seattle. So it was just interesting to watch you know this movement across the city and I was surprised to see how much interest how many writers we really have in the city. Now we have a lot of readers that's obvious with all of our branches but we also have a lot of writers and a lot of people who write poetry which is a wonderful thing.

[00:25:30] So Sally hedges blanket is in her friend Amy Albertson whom read earlier were part of that catchment area of that Douglas truth branch.

[00:25:42] I held the workshops there in October of last year. Sally has lived in the C.D. for 27 years and it was great to hear her talk about the neighborhood and about her experience teaching because she taught in classrooms Sally says that she knows the plans are forces that pull people together.

[00:26:07] I love that.

[00:26:09] And one of the things that subsequently happened that she let me know is that after the workshops she took. She continued she's now joined a writers group which is just wonderful. So I'm very happy that Sally is here with us to share her poems.

[00:26:31] Yeah after lots of years in the classroom sort of telling people about writing and doing a little starting. I'm trying to pull it all together for myself. So it was great to be at Douglas truth to try some things.

[00:26:45] This is called twenty fourth and e pine sunlight on Technicolor maple leaves that drop in a heap of red yellow purple and brown ochre showers Gray clearing Gray repeat a little longer one about a new addition in my life. I had a couple of ideas untitled which works for a lot of things. The tail of the dog which I thought it was cute. I did like Claudia's suggestion. So we're going to go today with tail wagging Teddy. There was the basketball the voices of children the car horn intending to warn you bolted leash trailing gone no matter how many people I stop no matter where I post flyers no matter how many blocks I walk gone the facts are few newly adopted male black lab mix white right front par four years old chipped temporary tags heart racing gone people stop what they're doing to

listen they say they're gonna be on the lookout and they wish me luck 24 hours it's raining sense dissipate 48 hours more rain 72 hours footsteps running up and down the deck stairs it's Teddy hungry wet tail wagging Teddy.

[00:29:20] So now for a change of pace we are very fortunate to have that musician writer and educator Mo province share with us this afternoon. In addition to operating soundboard at various studios and venues around Seattle playing bass and performing original music with her duo Moselle Moore also collaborates with the Bushwick book club and in this cup and then it is in this capacity that I have come to know her Bushwick book club is an extraordinary organization that promotes the love appreciation and analysis of literature through songwriting and schools as well as run the most amazing book club ever in my humble opinion. Essentially what they do is they select a book and then they ask musicians of all genres to read the book and interpret it. And when you show up for the book club meeting you essentially come into a concert where the musicians perform for you.

[00:30:27] Their interpretation of the book and if you have also read the book it's quite an extraordinary experience. It's funny sad that musicians are just so accomplished is really a wonderful thing and I encourage you to check them out and go to one of their book club readings.

[00:30:45] So with that I give it up to you Mo.

[00:30:51] Thank you.

[00:30:52] Um and I will say the next book club show is Le Petit proms and it's in three weeks from today at the Fremont Abbey in early show. Um at 6:00 p.m. all ages. Uh I'm gonna play a song for you that is the title track from my latest album uh that's on sale over here for ten bucks. It's called the neighborhood has changed and uh. It was intended it s to play as uh really accessible pop song that might speak to all the massive changes that have happened in Seattle especially the last four or five years. But um it really is a song about um colonization

[00:31:47] A thousand years ago and a thousand before that. Long the Black River people lived and worked in live then in 1916 it dried up and went away because the lake washington ship canal was around to Salmon Bay. Now there's concrete and glass but an ancient glacial lake and Oh people do now is complain. They say there's too much traffic man it was different back in the day. Back in the day it was before eminent domain.

[00:32:20] And it's never come again. Coming back again

[00:32:29] Because the neighborhood has changed. Change the neighborhood is

[00:32:36] Change the neighborhood has changed. Change the neighborhood is Chen

[00:32:45] Changed. The neighborhood is changing. Every day in ballet brings a new proposed land use sign. The tearing down the houses to build townhomes that are all alike and so much wealth in



the hands of so few means nobody's left you can take care like they used to. Never coming back again

[00:33:22] Because the neighborhood has changed. Change the neighborhood as

[00:33:31] The neighborhood has changed. Change the neighborhood has changed. Lee

[00:33:45] Me there. Leave. It is Jane. J is

[00:34:04] The Neighborhood Change. Change the neighborhood is change the neighborhood has changed.

[00:34:22] Life as We Know It is in life as we knew it. The. Only thing is change that is we know it is there as we knew with the whole thing. The city is changed so keep the history and teach the history teach this to me and to

[00:34:48] Keep the history teach the history here. Only thing is the

[00:34:56] Chain.

[00:35:02] Thank you. Uh

[00:35:08] And then um real quick Claudia asked me to collaborate um musically with one of her poems. And um. So you will hear it later. Um. And uh I thought that I would just sort of give you a brief snippet into what my collaborative process is like with the Bushwick book club. So um I just got the poems this week and the one I chose um which you'll hear is beautiful. And uh it's it's um it's a poem that speaks to the physical connections that we all share with library books that um. A book that you hold in your hands in your space. Uh someone before you held it in their hands in their space and someone after you will as well and there's a physical connection that translates into emotionally and spiritually as well. Mm hmm. And um so I just sat with that poem for a little while and thought uh I came up with um just kind of an idea for a verse and maybe a beginning of an idea of how a course might work. And I just thought I'd share that little beginning of an idea with you

[00:36:17] To memorize it to because it's so short.

[00:36:29] Neighbor to Neighbor. Print imprints hand shake in spite of a few because we uh connected collectively owning these true

[00:36:51] Solitary and so shown maybe the most will ever be close to each other's spaces this gracious and gentle exchange. It happens because just because. Happens because just because

[00:37:26] All right. That's a preview for you. Thank you. Applause

[00:37:42] Thank you so much. That was also. One of the things that

[00:37:49] One of the things that Bushwick Book Club does and has done with writers across the city is put their work to music so the Jack Straw Writers for instance. It's a group of 12 writers that get chosen every year and in general there's been a collaboration with the with the Bushwick book club.

[00:38:07] And it's just extraordinary to write something and then be gifted like I just was with Mo's interpretation of my poem which I will read shortly.

[00:38:17] But before I read that poem I wanted to read the middle of the three poems I wrote for the library and this one is called meditation at the reference desk and it really is a meditation on what words mean so meditation at the reference desk today I learned that the third stomach of a ruminating beast aside from a Masson is also known as the book.

[00:38:49] I learned this from another book a dictionary ten of them await prim and eager on the shelf above my desk ready to fulfill my reference needs. There are dictionaries for every hour of the day for every flower in the kingdom for those seeking validation or clarification for pesky and obedient words and for exhausted terms like no more wars ten books is a paltry figure considering the five thousand four hundred and eighteen items that come up under a dictionary in a library search. Just think that each word needs an arbiter of its meaning. Words are so unreliable worse than shifty rats scouring Seri streets at night tabulating trash.

[00:39:41] Was there ever a time when the word meant everything. A pledge.

[00:39:47] And the thing itself I imagine an ancient butcher whose work was blood but who spent his days and nights obsessed with the algorithm frenzy of letters combining into words. I see him slashing a lumbering beast wide open and finding among the steaming entrails a bulky thing with folds resembling pristine pages from an unwritten book we see what we want to see an oil slick transforms into iridescent dragonfly wings spread on concrete and undulating digestive organ becomes vellum awaiting a gushing Quill perhaps all those cows pass during that Dawn with melancholy seeping upwards from bog to half to hoof to pupil no best know that some things at least in what concerns the self are better left and written and unsaid. Why write down that which later may turn regret. Feelings may not be trusted in dictionaries even less. Besides all that ever has been said is there imposed on the primordial plain wedged between a mass and heart and even though humans don't have four stomachs. Maybe my mother is onto something when she advises me to forget cross references and to follow my gut.

[00:41:31] It's a long meditation that arriving at something which we all kind of sort of know anyhow so our next reader is Rachel Kessler and she says that she loves to collaborate with the city and the people and critters who inhabit it. She's a poet essayist a visual artist teaches a great and a teacher and a great observer of the city as a teaching art as she works with homeless adults people in recovery youth in detention and kids from kindergarten through high school. As a writer and the school's instructor Rachel and I share a love of the city and of collaborating with each other and can

be both found standing on the sidelines watching our daughter's soccer games Rachel came to right at the central branch welcome reached Thank you Claudia.

[00:42:27] Yeah.

[00:42:29] Hi. If you want to find me here I'm usually walking up and down yes floor way. I've been researching that street and then interviewing and talking with folks who live and work and have lived and worked along it. And so my poem is about around twenty six and Gessler and it's called another rehab in the seedy let the old houses be the long lawn wave and quiet defiance at the red restless Mar of new construction be silent let werewolf mutter along the rafters Naing these good bones that the porch slope that the screen door creak open to cracked Street that the damp air blow through that the old houses thing that their rooms rattle full of grandmas and aunties and kids and cousins let needle touch black pool of vinyl let base bottom out speakers shiver floorboards that broke down cars Bloom dandelions like they did in our youth that the blue tarp fray in the rain that the old houses be

[00:43:55] So beautiful thank you so much. I also wanted to say that the other project that I am working on is a digital poetic map of Seattle and almost all of this poems and hopefully all of them will make it onto the map and essentially what it will be is a map of Seattle with dots on it and when you click on the dots poems will pop up and you will read poems from folks all across the city. And many of those poems are of people who could not be here today and those who are here today. You could reread those poems when the map goes live which hopefully will be if not by the end of this month then early May our next reader is Fred Jaffe.

[00:44:37] She lives and works in West Seattle when she becomes overwhelmed with the dismantling of our democracy. She heads to Lincoln Park which where the whales and Eagles remind her to breathe. Read as poem for utility is part of this year's poetry on buses. Your body of water is the title of that project. Fred came to write at the Southwest branch. Welcome Fred.

[00:45:07] So I just wanted to close the poem fertility is from last year and the poetry on buses this year was another poem that I wrote that's going to be on the buses and it's called Polly wogs first prayer. So I wrote about Dell Ridge and I don't know if any of you know raise your hand if you have heard of Dell ridge. Oh OK. Great. So Dell Ridge is a part of West Seattle but it's a special separate art. It's not separate geographically but I think in people's minds. And I wrote about the corner of Dell Ridge and orchard which is actually where there's a gas station that I go to for gas and I also have friends who live in CO housing projects and in Dell Ridge. So I have good associations with it.

[00:46:00] And this is called New Blue Yodel in D minor feet on concrete heading south after the rain.

[00:46:10] More rain grows on telephone lines. So discontent everywhere they have been discriminated against D for Dell Ridge D for don't think twice D for Dell Ridge D for demagogue this is going nowhere there's nowhere I'd rather be I'm heading to the pawnshop where neon lights are blue heading to the pawn shop where it's 1962 and to find a ukulele with a nowhere song or two D for Dell

Ridge D for dollar store D for Dell Ridge D for don't spend more. This is going nowhere. There's nowhere I'd rather be. Thank you

[00:47:07] Thank you so much for it. That's wonderful. So our next poet is also from West Seattle Kerry Lucic Lucic.

[00:47:16] She came to write at the West Seattle branch. She loves nature and animals including humans spent time in the Pacific Northwest in her youth and relocated to Seattle 20 years ago to be near the evergreens mountains and water

[00:47:32] Kerry also volunteers at the Seattle Aquarium and was a docent. I believe you may be you still are but she was a docent their last year and I got an email from her letting me know that she had conducted a series of poetry workshops there inspired in part by the ones we had done at the Southwest library branch. They the poems and photographs that they used were on display at the aquarium and she asked me if I would like to go see them and of course I said yes. And I ran to the aquarium and I went to take a look at this amazing board of poems and photographs that all came from Kerry's enthusiasm of poetry and animals and I just thought how brilliant that this is this is precisely the civic moments that we want to have where we learn something and one one place and we take it across the city and transform it and turn it into something else. That was a wonderful thing. Thank you Kerry and thank you for sharing your poem with us

[00:48:43] I was not as ambitious as Claudia. It was just one collaboration with a fellow volunteer but it was a really amazing experience and it was definitely informed by the workshops which I started attending with Claudia around the same time. I actually had stopped writing poetry for a couple of decades. I'm interested in all kinds of writing but I think poetry comes from somewhere else it comes from a deeper well and it's almost like the more there is going on that's significant the more agitation there is at the surface and what I loved about these workshops was that Claudia had all these creative ways to kind of stir the waters and look at pictures and have discussions really interesting topics reading poems and we had had a really great discussion and then a technique which I which she was teaching that day was found poems and I picked one where you take some randomly grouped together text and you pick out some words and then you just put them into a poem or you add your own words and read a poem.

[00:49:47] And that was the poem that I liked the best. But then I lost it for a year and this poem is called found lost found I was thinking about my neighborhood but also other neighborhoods that are that have hard times going on the slam door sounds down the chambered nautilus of my ear dazzling window light lays me down flat here.

[00:50:15] Revisiting the same corners same streets as 30 years ago.

[00:50:20] But no sanctuary no all busy in a rush. Walk don't walk stop and go. Green light red light outlined body painted on the sidewalk stamped over by seismic pedestrian waves and the lost real body limp is a mollusk gone to overlook or ignore was all the traffic pattern allowed to care was not

their job. To overlook or ignore was all the traffic pattern allowed. We are all only tenants on this Earth now rushing on passing on.

[00:50:58] Gone. Thank you

[00:51:06] Thank you Carrie and thank you for making it here today.

[00:51:10] So we have two more readers. The next reader is of Nigerian descent. Kill him tell a Vive ESO Seattle native whose work merge is primarily pragmatic thinking with a more and their genetic and flavorful attitude with hints of hip hop and pop culture influences. Q I'm showed up at the Douglas truth branch I think just kind of as a drop in thing and then he was very interested in what we were doing and when I started doing the series here at the central branch he came to every single one of those workshops which was just wonderful. KG writes poetry and prose and they've actually heard him at the Sorrento Hotel last fall and so he is an active writer in the city and I encourage you to keep out your ear and eye for his name so kill him

[00:52:16] Like everyone. So at this pride at this workshop Claudia actually challenged me and she made me think about my city in a different light and more about a specific place and she made us write about two different uh she gave us two different prospect. She said you can write about the city that you love and the city that you would like to change and the city that I would like to change was more in my wheelhouse. I can be a bit of a complainer at times but. But when reviewing it I looked and I said I fell in love with the city that I love and there is a place that I frequent often and it's the Pike Place Market and I decided to write about it because it's awesome place especially when the sun's out.

[00:53:02] Yes cobblestone roads luring you inside wonderous caverns of memories of reds and browns coating the heavenly warmth of commerce companionship reflecting welcoming faces and foreign dispositions intrigued by the promise of adventure sweet and savory rides the airwaves to hallways buried within themselves triumph and despair wound in debt and deflated dreams. Softened with a gaze of interests layers of shoes at a snail's pace keep the cadence to the spirits heartbeat highlighted by high hats of chatter overlaying strings of desire all under the eye of a golden pig. Thank you

[00:54:11] I love the last line in that poem. The eye of the gold pig.

[00:54:16] So our last reader is Jacqueline where she's a poet and spoken word artist and a member of the African-American writers alliance had the pleasure of reading with Jay at an event for Dia de los Muertos at the center of La Raza. And it's been wonderful enjoying her company and wisdom and skill at this workshops both at the Douglas truth and that the central branch poetry and spoken word. J tells us feed my soul and spirit and it's written to touch an emotional nerve. Welcome J

[00:55:00] This is what I get for running late.

[00:55:02] I'm the last who my brother is here and he knows no matter what the event I'm late so I was torn.

[00:55:16] I had two poems and it's not until I'm standing here that I'm picking the one right now. So this is called I am just tired my blood is boiling my temperature is rising because drivers are sick and tired of it like me because I pay the daycare by the minute after 6 p.m. because snarling I'll bein no tigers are on the hunt seeking more land to devour because corporate Goliath is pressing a foot on our necks because it's a hard enough life for us because the bumper to bumper with no end in sight traffic is stressful because the city of Seattle should've stood their ground plan bettered listen to residents issued fewer building permits in Columbia City because the leaders should have protected the character of the neighborhoods choked by the big boom because of rats in cages with no room to move can't go berserk because we are not experiments because even the best moist cookies can crumble because the Sahara is too hard for refugees because the Arctic is melting because the car in front of me is going to slow because the car in front of him is going to slow because my blood is boiling. My temperature is rising and I am just tired and will have to pay the late daycare fees and because nine and on the car in front of me is stuck in traffic to thank you

[00:57:26] Thank you Jay. That had more to do with your last name the order of the readers. So before I read my last poem I actually brought some samples of can you sort of see these are the poems that got written at

[00:57:45] Outdoors and you saw some in the slideshow that got written outdoors at the lake city Farmer's Market the library is right in front of the farmer's markets we spilled onto the street and invited folks to come and write and there were so many people who came and sat down and put together poems and the way I did this is I brought words. It was the easiest way to imagine how to ask somebody to write a poem in the middle of buying carrots and had no apples you know. So there were bags with an array of words and they organized. I mean whichever way they wanted and it was amazing it was. I also did it because this was easily approachable for children and many kids came and sat and made poems as well.

[00:58:31] But I wanted to read one of these the other ones you saw some up on the on the screen. This one says I find you among strawberries and Raveling. The moon may soft peas flock within us all and that was Rachel Linette who wrote that Julian t Weaver wrote. I offer a spectacular honey heirloom salad. Concord grapes strawberries windblown moons sleep and pumpkin peace so those were two of the poems that that have got written.

[00:59:16] Through that poetic experience in the last poem I will read and the last poem of the afternoon is a poem titled ode to library books and I started writing this poem at the Sojourner Truth branch with the group on the particular day in which we talked about things that we wanted to change about the city or the city we imagine. And I sat down and I started writing some thoughts just like everybody else. And then they continued working at. And then I workshopped this poem here with kill em and the group that day who came to the central branch. So this is truly a library poem in that it's inspired by the library.

[00:59:55] But it was written here at the library so ode to library books because more than ink glints beneath the rails of the printed page because like snowflakes each person's hands profile unique lines because every time a library book is borrowed lifelines overlay each other because borrowed books bear fingerprint constellations on their backs because library books possess beyond the writing on their pages because on borrowed pages we leave something of ourselves behind us tender evidence because fingerprints we mean as glaciers remain in the valleys they carve because imagine all the points of connection because older hands may yet find their useful versions on the cover of the same book. And because over the same borrowed book neighbors not on speaking terms may still shake hands amicably because books know if we eat cookies in bed or if we buy the glow of a bigger light we'd curled up on an old couch at 4 a.m. because the trouble we would be in if books could talk because books visit our homes and witness the contents of the bags we carry because hand upon hand build the Seven Wonders of the ancient world because in a city of almost a million chances are we'll find each other first on the pages of a library book because from hand to hand home to home library books map the city because a hand turns pages of a book collectively own feeds a gracious and gentle thing a communal spirit whose wings span over park benches over streets and pea patch plots affirming dreams and daydreams alike hatching songs the poor and cycle over us all like springs Poland and winters rain. And

[01:02:21] That concludes our reading for the afternoon. I know that Carlita wants to say a few closing words and I want to thank you so much for coming out and to you who came to the library to write thank you for that I hope you continue writing and sharing your poems with all of us.

[01:02:39] Thank you Claudia. I think we all should thank Claudia. For her fine service. It's gonna be a hard act to follow. We don't know what's going to happen with the next civic poet whether they will partner with the library again but I think it was an excellent opportunity to spread the word of poetry. I work in the art department and it's really surprising actually to all of us on the staff how many people ask where is the poetry section so there is a sort of prevailing notion that people don't read poetry and that really isn't true. Many people come and they just say well I just want to browse. How interesting. So if you are a reader or you're a writer of poetry The library is also the place for you to come to hone your craft and to find out all of these interesting writers who are presenting material. So actually one beautiful thing that came out of this tenure as civic poet is that Claudia has a book. You don't have it here. This city her cheque book which is available and then Mo has her C.D. there. So let us partake of their work and you can have refreshments here and thank you so much for coming.

[01:04:19] This podcast was presented by the Seattle Public Library and Foundation and made possible by your contributions to the Seattle Public Library Foundation. Thanks for listening.