



# Media Announcement

## Autumn Arrives with Two New Pieces from Poetry in Motion



**Left:** Srikanth Reddy, “Everything” from *Facts for Visitors*. Copyright © 2004, The Regents of the University of California. With Permission of University of California Press Books. *River Light* (2022) © Kiki Smith, Grand Central Madison. Commissioned by MTA Arts & Design. Photo: Jason Mandella.

**Right:** Danez Smith, “little prayer” from *Don’t Call Us Dead* (Graywolf Press, 2017). Copyright © 2017 by Danez Smith. Used by permission of The Permissions Company, Inc., on behalf of Graywolf Press. *Bensonhurst Gardens* (2012) © Francesco Simeti, NYC Transit 18 Av Station. Commissioned by MTA Arts & Design.

(NEW YORK, NY — September 5, 2024) MTA Arts & Design announces the release of two new poems for the Poetry in Motion program. Chosen in collaboration with the Poetry Society of America, the poems are paired with selections from MTA Arts & Design’s permanent artwork collection.

“As autumn sets in, activities begin to move indoors and ridership increases,” said **Sandra Bloodworth, Director MTA Arts & Design**. “The transit system is a fitting home for poems that touch on exploration and discovery. With their vibrant artwork pairings, these works are sure to appeal to students returning to the classroom and all who encounter them.”

“In their poems, Srikanth Reddy and Danez Smith confront life’s dichotomies—ruin and healing, love and estrangement,” said **Matt Brogan, Executive Director Poetry Society of America**, “and remind us that every new beginning, every new world, starts with an act of lyric imagination.”

The new additions: “Everything” by Srikanth Reddy and “little prayer” by Danez Smith, are presented in print and on digital screens throughout the subway as well as commuter rail cars and Metro-North and Long Island Railroad stations, including the main hall of Grand Central Terminal

and Grand Central Madison. “Everything” is paired with a detail from Kiki Smith’s mosaic artwork *River Light* (2022) at LIRR Grand Central Madison. Flecks of glittering white glass are set against varied shades of blue to capture the sense of sunlight dancing across the water’s surface. “little prayer” is complemented by a detail from Francesco Simeti’s *Bensonhurst Gardens* (2012), a glass artwork at 18 Av Station. In the foreground, a field of flowers burst with color; in the distance a barren mountain range rises to meet a lavender sky full of wispy clouds.

The following is text of “Everything”:

She was watching the solar eclipse  
through a piece of broken bottle

when he left home.  
He found a blue kite in the forest

on the day she lay down  
with a sailor. When his name changed,

she stitched a cloud to a quilt  
made of rags. They did not meet,

so they could never be parted.  
So she finished her prayer,

& he folded his map of the sea.

The following is text of “little prayer”:

let ruin end here

let him find honey  
where there was once a slaughter

let him enter the lion's cage  
& find a field of lilacs

let this be the healing  
& if not let it be

## About the Poets

**Srikanth Reddy’s** latest book of poetry, *Underworld Lit*, was a finalist for the Griffin International Poetry Prize, the Poetry Society of America’s T.S. Eliot Four Quartets Prize, and a Times Literary Supplement “Book of the Year” for 2020. He is the poetry editor of *The Paris Review*, and a co-editor of the Phoenix Poets book series at the University of Chicago Press. His new book of lectures on poetry and painting, *The Unsignificant*, is forthcoming from Wave Books in September.

**Danez Smith** is the author of *Bluff, Don't Call Us Dead*, winner of the Forward Prize for Best Collection and a finalist for the National Book Award, and *[insert] boy*, winner of the Kate Tufts Discovery Award. They live in Minneapolis.

## About the Artists

**Kiki Smith**, born 1954 in Nuremberg, Germany, uses a broad variety of materials to continuously expand and evolve a body of work that includes sculpture, printmaking, photography, drawing, and textiles. Smith has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions worldwide including over 25 museum exhibitions. Her work has been featured at five Venice Biennales, including the 2017 edition. She is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and in 2017 was awarded the title of Honorary Royal Academician by the Royal Academy of Arts, London. Previously, Smith was recognized in 2006 by TIME Magazine as one of the "TIME 100: The People Who Shape Our World." Other awards include the Skowhegan Medal for Sculpture in 2000; the 2009 Edward MacDowell Medal; the 2010 Nelson A. Rockefeller Award, Purchase College School of the Arts; the 2013 U.S. Department of State Medal of Arts, conferred by Hillary Clinton; and the 2016 Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Sculpture Center, among others. She is an adjunct professor at NYU and Columbia University.

**Francesco Simeti** lives and works in New York. He is currently working on a public installation for the Los Angeles Metro. Francesco has had solo exhibitions at venues such as XNL, Piacenza (2022), Francesca Minini, Milano (2021), Assembly Room, New York, (2019); Open Source Gallery, New York (2017); Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palermo (2012); and Artists Space, New York (2009). His work has been included in group exhibitions at PAC, Milano (2022), MACTE, Termoli (2022), Magazzino d'Arte Italiana, Cold Spring, NY, (2020); Museo Civico di Castelbuono, Palermo (2019); ICA Singapore (2017); Palazzo Reale, Milan (2016); and Castello di Rivoli Museum of Contemporary Art, Turin (2014). He has also exhibited work at the Triennale di Milano (2014 and 2013). He works with the gallery Francesca Minini in Italy, and is involved in ongoing design collaboration with Maharam, New York.

## About Poetry in Motion

MTA's Poetry in Motion program has produced more than 200 poems or excerpts since its inception in 1992. After a hiatus of four years, from 2008 through 2011, the popular program returned in March 2012 under the aegis of Arts & Design.

To learn more about this MTA Arts & Design program, visit <https://new.mta.info/agency/arts-design/poetry-in-motion>

To learn more about the Poetry Society of America, visit <https://poetrysociety.org/>

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