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# POETRY INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

## LAUREATES & LEGENDS

Today we will get inspired by laureates and legends from around the world. Poetry International organizes the first Poetry Summit with the Dutch Poet Laureate, Babs Gons. This jubilee edition of the festival brings together only the most renowned poets - all recipients of the highest (inter) national honors.

As representatives of their countries, they participate in lectures, conversations, workshops, interviews, debates, and performances. Don't miss it: this special jubilee edition celebrates Poetry International Festival's 55th anniversary with a unique gathering of influential voices!

See our complete program over here  
On our website: [poetry.nl](https://poetry.nl)



Or on our digital timetable app • TMSQR  
Do you prefer to view the timetable on your phone? Then go to our festival app in Time-Square. Download it here.



## HIGHLIGHTS

Poets: Simon Armitage, Jean D'Amérique, Dana Cernane (sign language) and Derek Otte

### Tips

**Children's program: The Junior Poetry Summit (7+): Poems with a golden touch**

If you're good at writing poetry, you might win a prize. If you're really good, you might win a prize twice. And if you're exceptionally good at it? Then you'll win every prize there is. This is exactly what happened to poet Bette Westera. For her poetry collections, she won not only the Gouden Griffel, but also the Woutertje Pieterse Prize and the Gouden Poëziemedaille. And not just once, no, she won all of these prizes twice(!) Bette is truly among the absolute best in children's poetry. Come listen to her stunning award-winning poems, with the most beautiful ones set to music by the musical duo Luc & Marcelle. They will perform with heartfelt songs full of humor in this interactive show for children aged 7 and up. The Junior Poetry Summit is a collaboration between Poetry International and Kleine Lettertjes.

### Poetry in sign language Deaf and hard of hearing program

This year, Poetry International once again dedicates a series of programs to sign language poetry. On June 15, the best deaf poets from the Netherlands and abroad will come to Rotterdam to perform their work. During Poetry International Festival, you will get to know top artists from the poetic genres of visual vernacular and spoken sign. If you're not yet familiar with these art forms, be sure to immerse yourself in the beautiful, expressive performances of the attending poets.



See our complete program for the deaf and hard of hearing over here:

### Erik Jan Harmens in conversation with Akwasi

This year, Harmens welcomes a special guest: the multi-talented artist and writer Akwasi. In addition to his impressive career in music and theater, he has made his mark in poetry with his performances and his collection *Laten we het er maar niet over hebben*. During this program, we'll delve into his connection with poetry and hear him perform new work. Don't miss this inspiring and insightful conversation between two passionate writers!

### Woorden Worden Zinnen

Woorden Worden Zinnen presents a special finale on the festival's closing day. National and international voices come together for a vibrant program. Get ready for performances by Haitian poet and hip-hop artist Jean D'Amérique and Dutch performer Akwasi. Rotterdam's own city poet laureate Benzokarim will share powerful new work, while up and coming Belgian author Zindzi Tillot brings experimental reflections to the stage. From Germany, we welcome Dana Cernane, a deaf poet known for her striking visual vernacular.

## VISTOR INFORMATION

All programs and rooms are free to walk in and out of with a wristband, but full = full applies. So be on time before a program starts to secure a place. The program in the foyer of LantarenVenster is freely accessible without a festival ticket.

Grab a quick bite at the LantarenVenster restaurant, explore the different stands in the foyer, get your merchandise at our Poetry International shop and take home your favorite poetry from the bookshop.

### Our top secret forthcoming poetry app

Can you keep a secret? We've been working on a poetry app. Wanna see it? Test it even? Be among the first to experience our Poetry app in the foyer. Your insights will help us in creating the best digital poetry experience possible.



Stop by our testing corner to get an exclusive first look, share your insights and help shape our poetry app. Start testing now!

### Poetry Buddies

Poetry Buddies are volunteers who are available for visitors with a support request. They are ready to help where needed. You can recognize our Poetry Buddies by their special T-shirts. Would you like to have a Poetry Buddy by your side during your visit, for example upon arrival, departure, or throughout your entire festival visit? Or do you need help, for example, to reach the festival location from the parking lot or metro station Wilhelminaplein? Feel free to put in a request for a Buddy beforehand, by sending an email to [info@poetry.nl](mailto:info@poetry.nl)

### Wheelchair accessibility


LantarenVenster is fully wheelchair accessible. The entrance for room 1 is located on the ground floor, the elevator to reach room 5 and 6 is located in the corridor (on the water side) behind the wheelchair-friendly toilet. Verhalenhuis Belvédère is also accessible for people who use a wheelchair or walker. The building has an elevator and adapted toilet, equipped with supports and adapted sink.

In the rooms, three places are always reserved for wheelchairs. These places are located at the front of the room on the first row.

### Visually impaired audience

We are happy to offer visually impaired people the opportunity to sit at the front. Are you bringing a guide or guide dog for the blind? This is allowed at all locations.

### Deaf and hard of hearing audience

On the Sunday of the festival, many programs are made in collaboration with and are accessible to deaf and hard of hearing audience. Programs that feature sign language interpreters will have a  sign next to the title in this leaflet.

On Sunday, you will see performances by the best deaf poets in the world, sign language interpreters are present at most programs.

### Toilets

At the festival, we make sure to spice up every corner of the festival. As you take a moment's respite in our restrooms, you'll find yourself in the company of poets from past editions of Poetry International Festival. Don't worry, they won't intrude your privacy. They're preoccupied, immersed in their verses with their eyes cast down on their pages. So, carry on in peace: do your thing, while the poets do theirs.

### Visitor survey

Poetry International would like to know how visitors experienced the festival. That's why we conduct audience research. Pollsters are walking around during the festival. After the festival, we will send you a survey by e-mail. If we don't have your e-mail address yet, you can also complete the survey yourself via this QR code or via one of the pollsters. Your data will be treated confidentially and will be used for this survey.



### Recordings for films and photographs

We record the festival on film and photo. The images are used for our archive and the promotion of future editions of Poetry International Festival.

### Questions and comments

If you have any questions, comments or compliments please let us know. Come to the festival box office in LantarenVenster (or mail us at [info@poetry.nl](mailto:info@poetry.nl)).

## SEE YOU IN 2026!

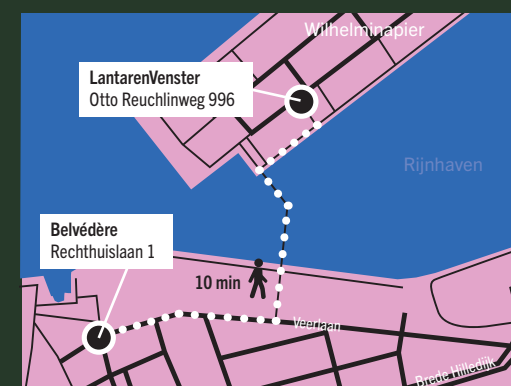
The 56<sup>th</sup> Poetry International Festival will take place from the 4<sup>th</sup> of June until the 7<sup>th</sup> of June 2026. Early bird tickets will be on sale the day after this year's festival on June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025 via our website: [www.poetry.nl](https://www.poetry.nl).

## LOCATIONS

LantarenVenster, 1, 5, 6 and foyer are located in LantarenVenster. Address: Otto Reuchlinweg 996, Wilhelminapier

Belvédère, Belvédère Expo and Belvédère Luisterlobby are located in Verhalenhuis Belvédère. Address: Rechthuislaan 1, Katendrecht.

It's a 750 meter walk from LantarenVenster to Verhalenhuis Belvédère



# SUNDAY



55th

POETRY INTERNATIONAL  
FESTIVAL ROTTERDAM

SUNDAY 15 JUNE 2025

## THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS



Special thanks to all poets, translators, artists, hosts, co-programmers, interpreters, volunteers, partners, freelancers and staff of Theater Zuidplein, LantarenVenster and Verhalenhuis Belvédère for making this festival possible.