



Supplemental Guide to 2018-2019 Open Contests for Contestants and Judges “Musts and Shoulds” for April 2019

PERSONA POEM (Open)

Deadline: April 20, 2019

Sponsor: Nancy Bierman

Theme and Form: Optional

Style: Persona Poem or Dramatic Monologue

Line Limit: 50

MUSTS:

1. The speaker in the poem must be a fictional or historical character—someone other than the poet.
Note: The speaker does not have to be a person (human being).
2. The poem must be a monologue, written from the speaker’s point of view.
3. The speaker must address a silent listener who is not the reader, or speak directly to the reader.
4. The poem must develop the speaker’s personality using his or her spoken words to delineate character.

SHOULDs:

The poem should deal with a specific event or relationship and the speaker’s reaction to it.

EXAMPLES:

Robert Browning: *My Last Duchess, Soliloquy in a Spanish Cloister*

T.S. Eliot: *Journey of the Magi, The Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock*

Alfred, Lord Tennyson: *Ulysses*

Ted Hughes: *Hawk Roosting*

Linda Bierds: *The Ghost Trio*

Matthew Arnold: *Dover Beach*

William Blake: *The Chimney Sweeper*

Katharyn Howd Machan: *Leda’s Sister and the Geese*

Ezra Pound: *The River Merchant’s Wife*