

Table of Contents

Introductory Statement	xiii
On Becoming a Poet by Mark Strand	xvii
Poetic Form: A Personal Encounter by Eavan Boland	xxv
Acknowledgments	xxxix

I VERSE FORMS

Overview	3
----------	---

THE VILLANELLE

The Villanelle at a Glance	5
The History of the Form	6
The Contemporary Context	8
<i>Ernest Downson: Villanelle of His Lady's Treasures</i>	9
<i>Edwin Arlington Robinson: The House on the Hill</i>	9
<i>William Empson: Missing Dates</i>	10
<i>Theodore Roethke: The Waking</i>	11
<i>Elizabeth Bishop: One Art</i>	11
<i>Dylan Thomas: Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night</i>	12
<i>James Merrill: The World and the Child</i>	13
<i>Mona Van Duyn: Condemned Site</i>	13
<i>John Hollander: By the Sound</i>	14
<i>Hayden Carruth: Saturday at the Border</i>	15
<i>Daryl Hine: Under the Hill</i>	16
<i>Marilyn Hacker: Villanelle</i>	16
<i>Wendy Cope: Reading Scheme</i>	17
<i>Jacqueline Osherow: Villanelle for the Middle of the Night</i>	18
Close-Up of a Villanelle: "One Art" by Elizabeth Bishop	19

THE SESTINA

The Sestina at a Glance	21
The History of the Form	22
The Contemporary Context	24
<i>Edmund Spenser: Ye wastefull woodes, bear witness of my woe</i>	25

<i>Philip Sidney: from Old Arcadia</i>	26
<i>Barnabe Barnes: Sestine 4 from Parthenophil and Parthenophe</i>	27
<i>Dante Gabriel Rossetti: Sestina: Of the Lady Pietra degli Scrovigni</i>	29
<i>Algernon Charles Swinburne: Sestina</i>	30
<i>Sir Edmund Gosse: Sestina</i>	32
<i>Rudyard Kipling: Sestina of the Tramp-Royal</i>	33
<i>Ezra Pound: Sestina: Altaforte</i>	34
<i>Weldon Kees: After the Trial</i>	36
<i>Anthony Hecht: The Book of Yolek</i>	37
<i>Miller Williams: The Shrinking Lonesome Sestina</i>	38
<i>Alberto Ríos: Nani</i>	39
Close-Up of a Sestina: "Sestina: Altaforte" by Ezra Pound	41
THE PANTOUM	
The Pantoum at a Glance	43
The History of the Form	44
The Contemporary Context	45
<i>Austin Dobson: In Town</i>	45
<i>Donald Justice: Pantoum of the Great Depression</i>	47
<i>Carolyn Kizer: Parents' Pantoum</i>	48
<i>John Ashbery: Pantoum</i>	49
<i>Nellie Wong: Grandmothers's Song</i>	50
<i>J. D. McClatchy: The Method</i>	51
Close-Up of a Pantoum: "Pantoum of the Great Depression" by Donald Justice	53
THE SONNET	
The Sonnet at a Glance	55
The History of the Form	56
The Contemporary Context	58
<i>William Shakespeare: Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?</i>	59
<i>Michael Drayton: Farewell to Love</i>	59
<i>Mary Wroth: from Pamphilia to Amphilanthus</i>	60
<i>John Milton: Sonnet XXIII: Methought I saw my late espoused saint</i>	60
<i>John Donne: Holy Sonnet: At the round earth's imagined corners</i>	61
<i>William Wordsworth: Composed upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802</i>	61

<i>Percy Bysshe Shelley: Ozymandias</i>	62
<i>John Keats: Bright Star</i>	62
<i>Christina Rossetti: from Monna Innominata</i>	63
<i>Elizabeth Barrett Browning: from Sonnets from the Portuguese (XLIII)</i>	63
<i>Gerard Manley Hopkins: Carrion Comfort</i>	64
<i>Edna St. Vincent Millay: What lips my lips have kissed, and where, and why</i>	64
<i>Countee Cullen: From the Dark Tower</i>	65
<i>Patrick Kavanagh: Epic</i>	65
<i>E. E. Cummings: from "Tulips and Chimneys"</i>	66
<i>George Barker: To My Mother</i>	66
<i>Jane Cooper: After the Bomb Tests</i>	67
<i>Gwen Harwood: A Game of Chess</i>	67
<i>Seamus Heaney: The Haw Lantern</i>	68
<i>Denis Johnson: Heat</i>	68
<i>Henri Cole: The Roman Baths at Nîmes</i>	69
<i>Mary Jo Salter: Half a Double Sonnet</i>	69
<i>Michael Palmer: Sonnet</i>	70
Close-Up of a Sonnet: "What lips my lips have kissed, and where, and why" by Edna St. Vincent Millay	71

THE BALLAD

The Ballad at a Glance	73
The History of the Form	74
The Contemporary Context	77
<i>Anonymous: The Cherry-tree Carol</i>	78
<i>Anonymous: Sir Patrick Spens</i>	79
<i>Anonymous: The Wife of Usher's Well</i>	81
<i>Anonymous: My Boy Willie</i>	82
<i>John Greenleaf Whittier: The Changeling</i>	83
<i>Oscar Wilde: from The Ballad of Reading Gaol</i>	86
<i>Elinor Wylie: Peter and John</i>	88
<i>Louis MacNeice: Bagpipe Music</i>	90
<i>John Betjeman: Death in Leamington</i>	91
<i>Ogden Nash: The Tale of Custard the Dragon</i>	92
<i>Gwendolyn Brooks: We Real Cool</i>	94

<i>Sterling A. Brown: Riverbank Blues</i>	94
<i>W. S. Merwin: Ballad of John Cable and Three Gentlemen</i>	95
Close-Up of a Ballad: "We Real Cool" by Gwendolyn Brooks	99
BLANK VERSE	
Blank Verse at a Glance	101
The History of the Form	102
The Contemporary Context	104
<i>Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey: from his translation of The Aeneid</i>	105
<i>Christopher Marlowe: from Tamburlaine the Great</i>	105
<i>William Shakespeare: from Julius Caesar</i>	106
<i>John Milton: from Paradise Lost</i>	107
<i>Charlotte Smith: from Beachy Head</i>	108
<i>William Wordsworth: from The Prelude</i>	109
<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson: Ulysses</i>	110
<i>Edward Thomas: Rain</i>	112
<i>Robert Frost: Directive</i>	113
<i>Richard Wilbur: Lying</i>	114
<i>Richard Howard: Stanzas in Bloomsbury</i>	117
Close-Up of Blank Verse: "Directive" by Robert Frost	119
THE HEROIC COUPLET	
The Heroic Couplet at a Glance	121
The History of the Form	122
<i>Aemilia Lanyer: from The Description of Cooke-ham</i>	123
<i>Anne Bradstreet: The Author to Her Book</i>	123
<i>Anne Finch: A Letter to Daphnis, April 2, 1685</i>	124
<i>John Dryden: from Absalom and Achitophel</i>	125
<i>Samuel Johnson: from The Vanity of Human Wishes</i>	126
<i>Phillis Wheatley: To S. M., a Young African Painter, on Seeing His Works</i>	127
<i>Oliver Goldsmith: from The Deserted Village</i>	128
<i>Alexander Pope: from An Essay on Criticism</i>	129
<i>Robert Browning: My Last Duchess</i>	130
<i>Wilfred Owen: Strange Meeting</i>	132
<i>Thom Gunn: The J Car</i>	133
Close-Up of the Heroic Couplet: "My Last Duchess" by Robert Browning	135

THE STANZA

The Stanza at a Glance	136
The History of the Form	137
The Contemporary Context	139
<i>Geoffrey Chaucer: from Troilus and Criseyde</i>	140
<i>Edmund Spenser: from The Faerie Queene</i>	141
<i>Thomas Wyatt: They Flee from Me</i>	142
<i>George Herbert: Easter Wings</i>	143
<i>William Blake: The Tyger</i>	143
<i>George Gordon, Lord Byron: So We'll Go No More A-Roving</i>	144
<i>Emily Dickinson: I died for Beauty—but was scarce</i>	145
<i>Thomas Hardy: The Convergence of the Twain</i>	145
<i>Walter de la Mare: The Song of the Mad Prince</i>	146
<i>Charlotte Mew: À Quoi Bon Dire</i>	147
<i>Jean Toomer: Song of the Son</i>	147
<i>Claude McKay: The Tropics in New York</i>	148
<i>Sara Teasdale: Night Song at Amalfi</i>	149
<i>Stevie Smith: Not Waving but Drowning</i>	149
<i>Yvor Winters: On Teaching the Young</i>	149
<i>Robert Hayden: Those Winter Sundays</i>	150
<i>Muriel Rukeyser: Yes</i>	150
<i>Carol Ann Duffy: Warming Her Pearls</i>	151
<i>Carol Muske: Epith</i>	152
Close-Up of a Stanza: "I died for Beauty—but was scarce" by Emily Dickinson	154

II METER

Meter at a Glance	159
A Brief Checklist of Further Reading on Meter	161

III SHAPING FORMS

Overview	165
----------	-----

THE ELEGY

Overview	167
<i>William Dunbar: Lament for the Makaris</i>	168
<i>Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke: If Ever Hapless Woman Had a Cause</i>	171

<i>Ben Jonson: On My First Son</i>	172
<i>Katherine Philips: Epitaph. On her Son H.P. at St. Syth's Church where her body also lies Interred</i>	172
<i>John Milton: Lycidas</i>	173
<i>Anne Bradstreet: Here Follows Some Verses upon the Burning of Our House July 10th, 1666. Copied out of a Loose Paper</i>	178
<i>Thomas Gray: Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard</i>	180
<i>Emily Brontë: R. Alcona to J. Brenzaida</i>	184
<i>Walt Whitman: O Captain! My Captain!</i>	185
<i>Matthew Arnold: Dover Beach</i>	185
<i>Ivor Gurney: To His Love</i>	187
<i>John Crowe Ransom: Bells for John Whiteside's Daughter</i>	187
<i>Louise Bogan: Tears in Sleep</i>	188
<i>W. H. Auden: In Memory of W. B. Yeats</i>	188
<i>Robert Lowell: from The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket</i>	191
<i>John Berryman: Dream Song 324</i>	194
<i>Frank Bidart: To the Dead</i>	194
<i>Edward Hirsch: In Memoriam Paul Celan</i>	196
<i>Garrett Hongo: The Legend</i>	197
<i>Douglas Crase: The Elegy for New York</i>	198
<i>Mark Doty: Tiara</i>	199
<i>Gjertrud Schnackenberg: Supernatural Love</i>	200
<i>Thomas Kinsella: Mirror in February</i>	202
<i>David St. John: Iris</i>	203
<i>Paula Meehan: Child Burial</i>	204
<i>Rosanna Warren: Song</i>	205

THE PASTORAL

Overview	207
<i>Christopher Marlowe: The Passionate Shepherd to His Love</i>	209
<i>William Shakespeare: from Love's Labor's Lost</i>	210
<i>Andrew Marvell: The Garden</i>	210
<i>William Wordsworth: To My Sister</i>	213
<i>John Keats: Ode on a Grecian Urn</i>	214
<i>A. E. Housman: Loveliest of Trees</i>	215
<i>Francis Ledwidge: The Wife of Llew</i>	216
<i>Babette Deutsch: Urban Pastoral</i>	216

<i>Janet Lewis: Remembered Morning</i>	217
<i>Ted Hughes: The Thought-Fox</i>	217
<i>Philip Larkin: The Explosion</i>	218
<i>James Wright: Lying in a Hammock at William Duffy's Farm in Pine Island, Minnesota</i>	219
<i>Derek Walcott: Midsummer, Tobago</i>	220
<i>Galway Kinnell: The Bear</i>	220
<i>Amy Clampitt: Fog</i>	223
<i>Jane Kenyon: Let Evening Come</i>	224
<i>Philip Levine: Smoke</i>	224
<i>Robert Hass: Meditation at Lagunitas</i>	226
<i>John Koethe: From the Porch</i>	227
<i>Alfred Corn: A Walrus Tusk from Alaska</i>	227
<i>Charles Wright: Looking West from Laguna Beach at Night</i>	228
<i>Les Murray: The Broad Bean Sermon</i>	229
<i>Lucie Brock-Broido: Of the Finished World</i>	230
<i>Thylias Moss: Tornados</i>	231
<i>C. K. Williams: Loss</i>	232
<i>Timothy Steele: Waiting for the Storm</i>	233
<i>Mary Kinzie: An Engraving of Blake</i>	233
<i>Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin: Pygmalion's Image</i>	233
<i>Louise Glück: Mock Orange</i>	234
<i>Mary Oliver: The Black Walnut Tree</i>	235
<i>Medbh McGuckian: Gateposts</i>	236
<i>Susan Prospere: Heart of the Matter</i>	236
<i>Mary O'Malley: Shoeing the Currach</i>	238

THE ODE

Overview	240
<i>Percy Bysshe Shelley: Ode to the West Wind</i>	241
<i>John Keats: To Autumn</i>	243
<i>Henry Timrod: Ode</i>	244
<i>Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: The Fire of Driftwood</i>	245
<i>Hart Crane: from The Bridge</i>	247
<i>Marianne Moore: The Paper Nautilus</i>	248
<i>Judith Wright: Australia 1970</i>	249
<i>Charles Simic: Miracle Glass Co.</i>	250

<i>Howard Nemerov: The Blue Swallows</i>	250
<i>Robert Creeley: America</i>	252
<i>Robert Pinsky: Ode to Meaning</i>	252
<i>Joy Harjo: Perhaps the World Ends Here</i>	254

IV OPEN FORMS

Overview	259
<i>W. B. Yeats: The Circus Animals' Desertion</i>	260
<i>T. S. Eliot: The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock</i>	262
<i>Langston Hughes: I, Too</i>	266
<i>Wallace Stevens: The Idea of Order at Key West</i>	266
<i>William Carlos Williams: Spring and All</i>	268
<i>Allen Ginsberg: America</i>	269
<i>Frank O'Hara: Ave Maria</i>	272
<i>Denise Levertov: Uncertain Oneiromancy</i>	273
<i>Sylvia Plath: Daddy</i>	274
<i>Adrienne Rich: Diving into the Wreck</i>	276
<i>Lucille Clifton: move</i>	279
<i>Sharon Olds: The Language of the Brag</i>	280
<i>Carolyn Forché: The Colonel</i>	281
<i>Ai: The German Army, Russia, 1943</i>	282
<i>Yusef Komunyakaa: Starlight Scope Myopia</i>	282
<i>Jorie Graham: Reading Plato</i>	284
Close-Up of Open Forms: "Diving into the Wreck" by Adrienne Rich	287
A Brief Glossary	289
Biographies and Further Reading	293
Suggested Reading	335
Credits	337
General Index	349
Index of Authors, Titles, and First Lines	357