



Supplemental Guide to 2020-2021 Open Contests for Poets and Judges
“Musts and Shoulds” for July 2021

Deadline: July 17, 2021
Sponsor: Marcel Duclos
Theme: Escape
Form: Organic Form, aka. Free Verse
Line Limit: 40

MUSTS:

According to Edward Hirsch, “Free verse is a form of non-metrical writing that takes pleasure in an emergent verbal music.” He adds that it is inspired by cadence, the natural rhythm of spoken language, that it possesses visual forms and uses the graphic line to differentiate itself from prose; that there is verbal music in the poem.

A free verse poem emerges from the organic nature of the subject. It has no preset pattern. It allows the reader more freedom to supply the verbal speed of the poem, the intonations and emphasis. S. T. Coleridge said that an organic poem developed itself from the writing. R.W. Emerson taught that such a poem has an architecture of its own. And when writer and reader interact, there arises a free conversation between them.

The organic form joins past and present, and it will live into the future.

EXAMPLES: [50 of the Best Free Verse Poems from Contemporary Poets](#)