A Line Meant

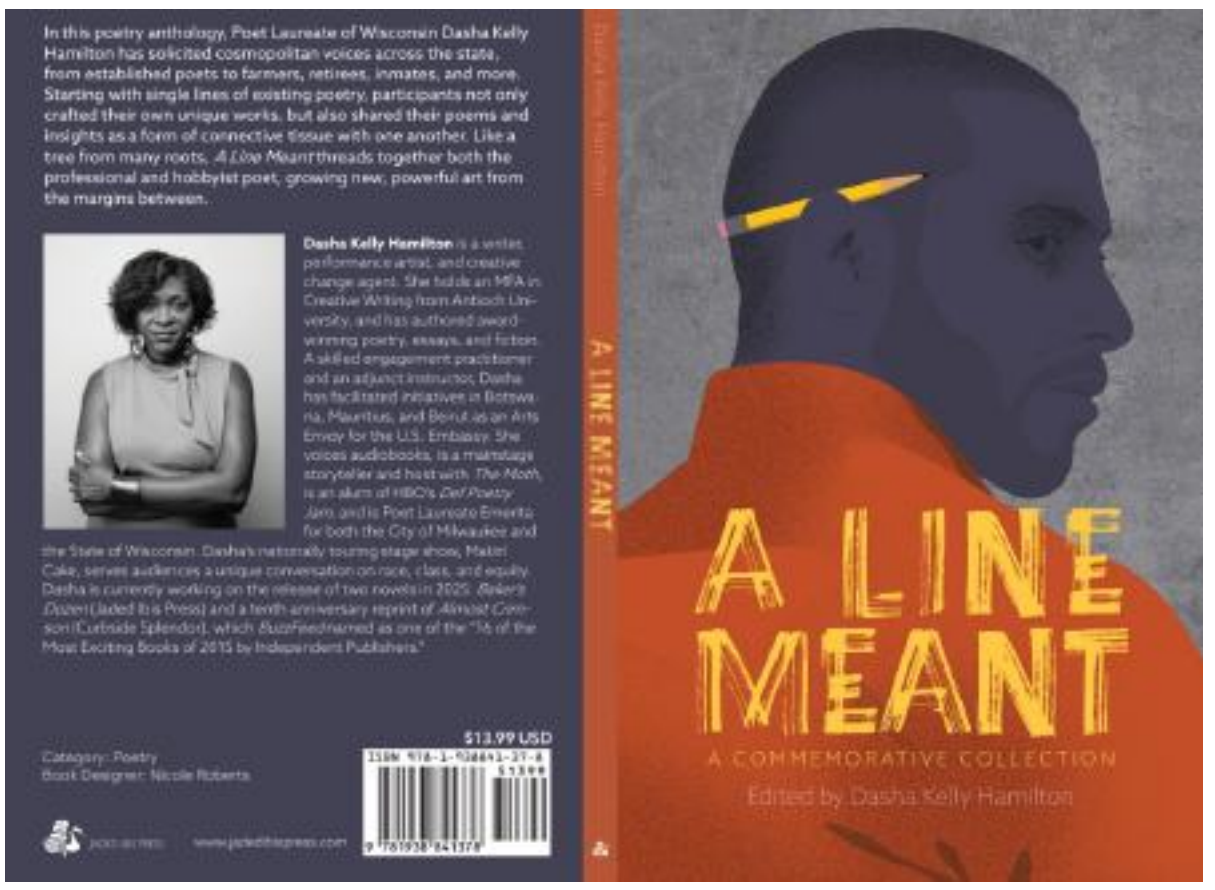
Creativity + Conversation + Community

Overview

The A Line Meant Project is a uniquely-impactful outreach initiative for building community and deepening intentional collaboration. This engagement protocol was created by Dasha Kelly Hamilton, a seasoned facilitator, sought-after speaker and dynamic engagement strategist. As a Creative Change Agent, Dasha is also a published novelist, writing coach and Poet Laureate Emerita for the State of Wisconsin and City of Milwaukee. A Line Meant (ALM) was initially launched as the signature project of her statewide laureateship. The ALM project can be replicated

A Line Meant

In this poetry anthology, Poet Laureate of Wisconsin Dasha Kelly Hamilton has solicited cosmopolitan voices across the state, from established poets to farmers, retirees inmates, and more. Starting with single lines of existing poetry, participants not only crafted their own unique works, but also shared their poems and insights as a form of connective tissue with one another.



Like a tree from many roots, A Line Meant threads together both the professional and hobbyist poet, growing new, powerful art from the margins between.

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ALM Poetry Prompts

Line Prompt	Poetry	Source
And holy hot damn, the world is suddenly something diff erent	How does the poet use detail?	“Blue Bird” -Nick Demske
Now tilted in prayer, humbled by the river	Now tilted in prayer, humbled by the river	“Water Writing its Own Story for Aurora” -Philomena Kebee
Unfurl, like petals longing to bloom	What are your favorite color descriptions in the poem?	“New Dimensions” -Cristina M R Norcross
We tell measured stories morning to afternoon	How does the poet use repetition?	“Rising Sun” -Margaret Noodin
The cool water is hard to gulp down	What does each list do to the poem?	“Quit Running In & Out” -Karen Middleton
Every distance seemed like an opening	How might the poem change with “you” “I” or “they” instead of “we”?	“Pandemic I” -Dana Maya

Line Prompt	Poetry	Source
In the bough of an anxious frenzy	Why does the ending work?	“American Happiness” -Nikki Wallschlaeger
Until the moon tapped on her window, calling her name	Is the title of the poem its true fi rst line?	“She Did Not Know” -Ethel Mortenson Davis
Once sweet with aging pears and autumn breezes	Observe how each stanza is one sentence; each one relays a story.	“Still Life” -Dawn Hogue
Angels and gods slow to mention who they might be	What do these name references do for the poem?	“Remember When” -Ken Graber
A canvas full of ocean and song	How does the poet use personifi cation?	“From a Door Worth Opening” -Destinny Fletcher

ALM Conversation + Story Building Prompts

Line Prompt	Conversation / Story	Source
Even with the right key in the keyhole, no entrance	Describe a time when something seemed like an opportunity, but wasn't.	“Untitled” -Alfonzo Washington
You are strongest at the best and worst of times	Watching yourself, could you voiceover narrate one of your “best and worst” moments?	“Freedom’s Lament” Donnie Gilchrist
Not rushing the process. I once heard patience builds progress	What do you ask yourself when a relationship stalls?	“Untitled” -Joseph Cook
Pouring out lies disguised as patriotism, as if I ain’t got my own set of eyes	What’s an American truth you want more people to understand?	“Like Yesterday’s Rain” -Gorden V. Pemrich
From hopeless to hopeful and dark to light, yesterday’s rain brought forth new life	What’s a hard time that became a gift?	“Somehow, Seems Like Yesterday’s Rain” -David Kilgore

Line Prompt	Conversation / Story	Source
I want your messiest messes, Your greatest core essence.	What would be your ad? Your warning label?	“On So Many Levels” -Fontaine Baker
The trees allied first Naked in their scene and sagging down	When was nature your medicine?	“Silhouettes” -Matthew McDowell
My world view is complex. A duality in singular form.	What is a contradiction in your life that you manage?	“Misunderstood” -Robert Patterson
Whispering winds lick my ears remnants of your voice sing happily	How do you imagine or remember ancestors?	“Untitled” -Terran Kess
I was just sitting in a dark cloud and now it’s got light in it	Share a memory when you lifted someone’s mood.	“My Poem” -NJ
your presence that was gifted to us a present	How have you experienced your presence as a gift?	“Dedicated to Ms. Dasha” -LT
The more I think, the more I need peace	Do your thoughts invite or interrupt peace?	“Roots” -AW

Line Prompt	Conversation / Story	Source
The days of ignorance we shall remember fondly	What were things -small and big- that surprised you about the adult world?	“When We Were” -Darius Ali Williams
Tart ways and stagnant air keeping me from being exactly who I always dreamt to be	Which old programs or stories have become limitations to your growth?	“Once Sweet with Aging Pears” -Anthony J. Machioté



Dasha's 3-2-1

Poem Starter

Dasha Kelly Hamilton is Poet Laureate Emerita for the State of Wisconsin and the City of Milwaukee. She is also a National Laureate Fellow of the American Academy of Poets. She conceived and launched the A Line Meant initiative in 2021.

The first A Line Meant anthology was published through Jaded Ibis Press in 2025. New poems are currently welcome for a second anthology edition.

3 Describe **3** images that come to mind.

2 What are **2** things the visual makes you imagine or wonder?

1 Explain **1** feeling or wish.

Technically, your poem is complete!

Artistically, you can tinker with language and add or rearrange the lines.

The poem will let you know when it's ready (they are never, ever "finished").

Please upload your poem to:
ALineMeant.org

Or

Send by postal mail to:
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