

# Journal of Humanistic Mathematics

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Volume 12 | Issue 1

January 2022

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## Poetry in the Glade: Bridges 2021 Fib Collection

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### Recommended Citation

"Poetry in the Glade: Bridges 2021 Fib Collection," *Journal of Humanistic Mathematics*, Volume 12 Issue 1 (January 2022), pages 467-500. DOI: 10.5642/jhummath.202201.35. Available at: <https://scholarship.claremont.edu/jhm/vol12/iss1/35>

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# POETRY FOLDER

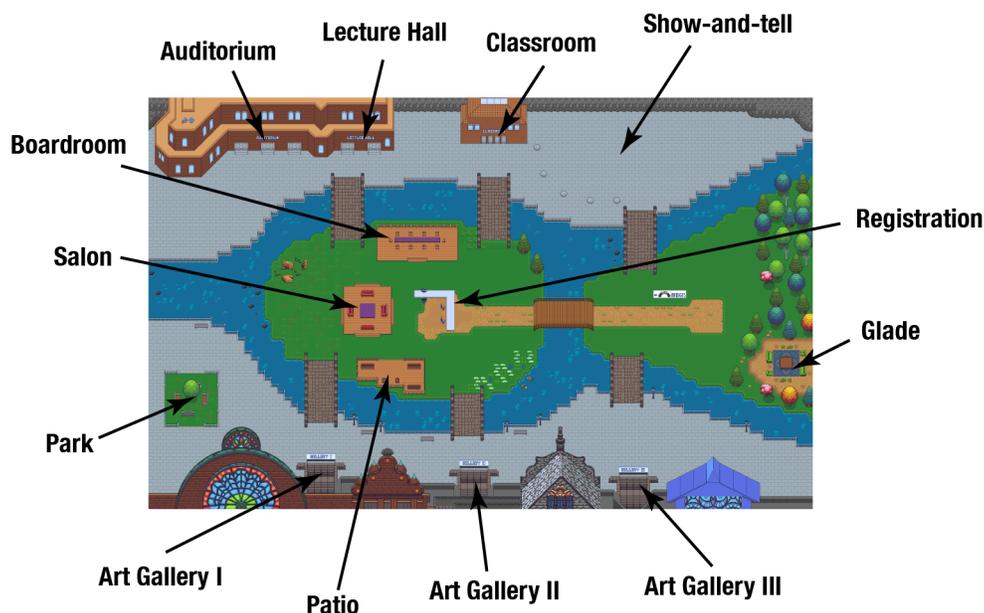


## *Poetry in the Glade: Bridges 2021 Fib Collection*

CURATED BY Sarah Glaz

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### Map of Königsberg (Bridges 2021 virtual space)



The Bridges organization<sup>1</sup> sponsors an annual conference of mathematical art, which includes among its many diverse offerings a mathematical poetry reading and related math-poetry activities. Due to the pandemic, this year's Bridges conference could not be held in-person, and for the second year in a row, all conference activities became virtual. Bridges 2021 virtual conference was held on August 1-4.

<sup>1</sup>For more information about the Bridges organization activities and annual conferences, see: <https://www.bridgesmathart.org>.

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Bridges 2021 virtual poetry reading consists of video readings by many of the poets whose work is featured in the present collection of poems. Along with the videos, the reading's site includes printable sample poems, and additional information about the poets and about past Bridges poetry readings and publications. This virtual reading may be visited and savored at leisure at:

[https://www2.math.uconn.edu/~glaz/Mathematical\\_Poetry\\_at\\_Bridges/Bridges\\_2021/The-program-and-the-poets-2021.html](https://www2.math.uconn.edu/~glaz/Mathematical_Poetry_at_Bridges/Bridges_2021/The-program-and-the-poets-2021.html).

The present collection of poems arose out of the Bridges poetry community in response to the Bridges organization's efforts to make the Bridges 2021 conference more interactive. It started with a tentative plan for an online "live" poetry reading in addition to the virtual reading. The duration was uncertain, and following a suggestion by Carol Dorf, we settled on a read-around format. Several months later, the Bridges organization had chosen an interactive software, Gather, and designed the Bridges 2021 virtual space in the form of the town of Königsberg with its seven bridges spanning the Pregel river. Euler would have rejoiced!<sup>2</sup> The Glade, a private area that was designated for specialized gatherings, is located in the middle of the virtual woods (see map). The poetry gathering was allotted a half an hour time slot in the Glade. With over thirty poets participating in the virtual reading, many of whom interested in getting together in the Glade during the conference, time became an issue. Alice Major came up with the idea of blink-poems, brief poems that allow for a read-around by many poets during a short period of time. From there, it was just a small step to settle on a special kind of blink-poem, a blink-poem with a mathematical structure, namely a Fib. At this point, Gizem Karaali, one of the two editors of *The Journal of Humanistic Mathematics*, invited us to publish the collection of Fibs in an upcoming issue of the journal. We enthusiastically accepted the invitation.

The Fibonacci sequence is the sequence made up of the following integers, called Fibonacci numbers:

1; 1; 2; 3; 5; 8; 13; 21; 34; 55; 89; 144; ...

Starting from the number 2 in the third position, each number in this sequence is constructed by adding the previous two Fibonacci numbers.

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<sup>2</sup>Leonhard Euler (1707-1783) laid the foundations of two areas of mathematics, graph theory and topology, by answering the question: Can a walk be found that crosses every one of the seven bridges of Königsberg once and only once? [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven\\_Bridges\\_of\\_K%C3%B6nigsberg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_Bridges_of_K%C3%B6nigsberg)

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A Fibonacci poem<sup>3</sup> follows the Fibonacci sequence to any length in its count of syllables per line, or words per line, or lines per stanza, or any other countable thing connected with the poem. A Fib<sup>4</sup> is a special case of Fibonacci poem, a poem of 6 lines whose syllable line count follows the first 6 numbers of the Fibonacci sequence: 1; 1; 2; 3; 5; 8.

In response to my call for Fibs, the Bridges poets emailed me an amazing array of poems: all in Fib form, but diverse in their topics, musicality, and writing style. Fib writing is addictive, and pretty soon I realized that I received many more than the one-Fib-per-poet that could be shared in the Glade. That occasion was so much fun, but the present collection reflects the abundance by including more than one Fib per poet whenever possible.

I am indebted to the Bridges organization for nurturing our poetry activities and creating the conditions under which this project could come into being. I thank the Bridges poets for their fine poems and their great help with all aspects of putting this collection together.

I hope you enjoy reading the Fibs in this collection as much as we enjoyed writing them! I also hope that our Fibs inspire you to write your own, and to join us at future Bridges poetry readings!

SARAH GLAZ  
BRIDGES ORGANIZATION POETRY READING COORDINATOR  
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<sup>3</sup>For more information about the Fibonacci sequence and its connection to poetry, see the paper, *Poems Structured by Integer Sequences*, by Sarah Glaz, *Journal of Mathematics and the Arts* 10, 44-52, 2016 <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17513472.2016.1231574>.

<sup>4</sup>The six-line, 20-syllable Fib was named and brought to wide public attention by Gregory K. Pincus in his blog entry of April 1, 2006. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/68971/1-1-2-3-5-8-fun>.

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THE MOMENT BEFORE THE STORM

as  
if  
nothing  
happened, just  
the thinnest crack ran  
across the canvas of the sky

ACADEMIC MISCHIEF

oh  
dear  
sorry  
darling, I  
forgot to mention  
your paper in my monograph

---

Gerd Åsta Bones  
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CATFISH

cat  
fish  
catfish  
can cat fish?  
can cat fish catfish?  
catfish fished cat – catastrophe!

BALANCE

me  
you  
a pair  
together  
weaknesses and strengths  
me and you – complementary

---

Robin Chapman  
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ABANDONED LOT

A  
cat,  
feral  
tortoise-shell,  
nurses her kittens  
in the yard gone to wildflowers.

THE BIG APPLE IN A TIME OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Hard  
rain  
pours down  
subway steps;  
riders in high boots  
calculate which stops will still work.

---

Marian Christie  
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AUBADE

First  
note  
predawn  
a song thrush –  
then robin, blackbird,  
chaffinch, wren. Earth turns, joyfully.

WHO AM I?

I  
am  
perfect.  
I'm the sum  
of Fibonacci  
numbers. Find me here – who am I?

---

Marion Deutsche Cohen  
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TRYING TO WRITE A FIB POEM

I  
like  
Fibs but  
Fib-numbers  
not so much Fib-words.  
I guess I'm not a Fib-poet.

TRYING TO WRITE A FIB POEM #2

Each  
line  
is not  
the sum of  
the previous two.  
It goes much further back than that.

---

Stephen Day  
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STAND TALL

I  
am  
a changed  
man. I now  
believe in love and  
a universe full of beauty.

---

Carol Dorf  
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ON BREATH IN AN ERA WHEN BREATHING HAS BEEN CALLED INTO QUESTION

Breathe  
first  
inhale  
then exhale  
like any pattern  
pleasure in the alternation

ON SPACE EXPLORATION AND BACKGROUNDS

Soil  
dirt  
include  
earth – planet  
orbiting through day  
and night – our only living home

---

Susan Gerofsky  
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GLIDED, GILDED

A  
lone  
canoe  
first sidles  
ocean surge, slides through  
moon rifts to enter earth's own heart.

BARELY, BLEARY

Please  
speak  
asleep  
in dreamy  
barley fields, while months  
on ample maple peaks elapse.

---

*Note:* In each of these poems, the twenty syllables of the Fib are structured as two iambic pentameters, with the additional constraint of using as many anagrams as possible. *Anna Grammatica:* Glided/ gilded, canoe/ ocean, first/ rifts, sidles/ slides, earth/ heart; bleary/ barley/ barely, please/ asleep/ elapse, speak/ peaks, ample/ maple.

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Sarah Glaz  
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MATHEMATICIAN

My  
breath  
on the  
window pane  
draws geometric  
figures. Look! A golden spiral!

I KNOW EACH ONE BY BARK AND NAME

A  
dog  
lives in  
each house on  
Berkeley Road and peers  
behind screen doors at passers-by.

---

David Greenslade  
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SPRING SCALES

Weigh  
scale  
balance –  
a kitchen  
marvel for children.  
Yes! This side is equal to that.

CELL PHONE

Phone  
rings  
in my  
jeans pocket  
while I'm still driving,  
my friend retrieves it with a smile.

---

Emily Grosholz  
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SUN

Though  
I  
Love you  
You are just  
A man and the great  
Golden sun is just a bright star.

MOON

The  
Moon  
Waning  
From full but  
Beautiful, runes and  
Ruins on its face, seas and clouds.

---

JoAnne Growney  
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DISCOVER

Pick  
up  
your pen.  
Think of ways  
that math is magic.  
Shape your words into a poem.

MY DILEMMA

I've  
lost  
the art  
of careful  
thought, asea in floods  
of trivial information.

---

*Note:* “Discover” first appeared in the paper, *Everything Connects*, by JoAnne Growney, *Journal of Mathematics and the Arts* 14, 66-68, 2020. Both “Discover” and “My dilemma” appeared in JoAnne Growney’s blog, *Intersections – Poetry with Mathematics*, <https://poetrywithmathematics.blogspot.com/> on September 11, 2019 and October 16, 2011, respectively.

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Kate Jones  
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DEKAMOSAIK

Ten  
Sides  
Embrace  
Twenty-five  
Golden ratio tiles  
In splendid star-lit symmetry.



## DIAMOND RAINBOW

Twelve  
Rhombs  
Purlin  
Rainbow's hues  
To delight the eye  
With palettes of infinitude.

---

Gizem Karaali  
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WHERE DOES MATH COME FROM?

If  
You  
Want to  
Do some math,  
Dive into the depths  
Of your mind, climb heights of your soul.

LOVE MOD 2

If  
He  
Loves me,  
The daisy  
Will kindly tell me.  
If he loves me not – boo, daisy!

---

Lisa Lajeunesse  
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TO THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF CANADA

Mass  
graves  
children  
died alone  
too late we listen  
to your voices of suffering

CITY CROWS

Crows  
dive  
brush my  
foolish head  
chase me well away  
from mewling young, hungry in nest

---

Cindy Lawrence  
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2021

back  
safe?  
maybe...  
just maybe...  
we can re-emerge  
amazing to connect with hugs

PEDAL ON THE PETALS

square  
wheels  
around  
and around  
smoothly in motion  
powered by the magic of math

---

*Note: Pedal on the Petals* was inspired by the square-wheeled tricycle featured at the National Museum of Mathematics (MoMath) <https://momath.org/>.

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Larry Lesser  
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FIB(ULA)

On  
the  
outside,  
not bearing  
much weight, leaving that  
legwork to bigger tibia

THE BIG FIB

Who  
knew  
such harm  
could come from  
simply repeating  
to his faithful a bigger lie

---

Alice Major  
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FIBONACCI AND THE GROWTH OF ACCOUNTING

Gift  
horse:  
*Liber*  
*Abaci* –  
Mounting new numbers,  
banking breaks into a gallop. . .

SUNFLOWER SEQUENCE

Bright  
gold  
petals,  
swirled seedheads.  
Spirals overlap,  
wrapping arms around each other.

---

Kaz Maslanka  
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THE CHALLENGE WITH FIBS

clunk  
clunk  
clunky  
clunkitty  
clunkitty clunk clunk  
where is the rhythm in this fib?

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE MOMENT

I  
love  
to love  
the present  
as my love's object  
it makes monogamy easy

---

Dan May  
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FIRE

The  
sky,  
full of  
orange smoke,  
is a shared trauma.  
Which fire should we put out first?

WAITING FOR A REPLY

Are  
you  
there, black  
square? Teaching  
to faceless muted  
Zoom is like waiting for Godot.

---

Bjoern Muetzel  
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RIDDLE

Three,  
Four,  
Seven,  
Guess the scheme!  
Then comes eleven.  
A variation of the theme!

THIRTEENTH SPIRAL OF HELL

Three  
forms,  
five forms,  
eight forms – see!  
Devilish magic  
of inflated bureaucracy.

---

Mike Naylor  
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#### FIBONACCI EMERGES

Stem,  
leaves,  
flowers...  
Nature spins  
chaos to order.  
Numerical secrets in bloom.

#### SPACING

Bad?  
Good?  
“Psycho,  
the rapist”?  
“Psychotherapist”?  
Spacing makes a big difference!

---

Doug Norton  
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EACH POEM A BRIDGE

Art.  
Math.  
Bridges  
Twenty-one.  
Together, yet not.  
Poetry bridges draw us near.

NEVER THE SAME RIVER TWICE

Day.  
Year.  
Cyclic.  
Not at all.  
Never two the same.  
Pseudoperiodicity.

---

Eveline Pye  
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ANTARCTICA

blood  
red  
algae  
bloom in snow  
icy mountains crack  
and seas rise all around our world

IMAGE OF MATH

no  
more  
dull gray  
color math  
yellow, red, purple  
creative, deep, elemental

---

Jacob Richardson  
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PUZZLED

Stop  
Frown  
Slow smile  
Try again  
A tricky problem  
Is the most fun your brain can have

---

S. Brackett Robertson  
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WHAT COUNTS

Know  
the  
last seed  
is needed  
spin it out, water  
carefully, grow spirals of math.

FLYING LESSONS ARE LIKE DANCING LESSONS

You  
take  
your first  
leap – attempt  
a twirl. Soon, you fly  
above the city, under stars.

---

Stephanie Strickland  
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A FIB TRUTH

Oh  
no!  
Again,  
we cannot  
meet in person. I'm  
hoping for 2022.

AI vs. NI

Now  
A  
I is  
all the rage!  
I choose Natural  
Eco-Evo-Devo-tuned smarts.

---

Susana Sulic  
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B-Lack H-ole B-**L**ack N-ight B-ad **N**-ight

Bad  
Bag  
Da Da  
The Title  
Is th-e poem  
Broo-k-lin B-ad Da **D**a Da

**V**-a- c- c-i-n-(q)-a-**C**-t-i-o-n

Me  
1  
*p-lus*  
As-**t**-Ra  
C-o -V-i- **D**  
**F**-i-b- o-**N**-a **C**- ci

---

*Note:* A different way of making syllables.

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Connie Tettenborn  
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#### DEALING WITH BIG DATA

Ask:  
“What?”  
Then, “How?”  
Statistics.  
One example of  
The significance of numbers.

#### BOTTOMS UP

Look.  
See.  
It’s true!  
Patterns lurk.  
Find them everywhere.  
Here’s a toast to Fibonacci!

---

Racheli Yovel  
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AN INFINITESIMAL LOVE POEM

Be  
my  
delta  
and I will  
be your epsilon:  
our infinitesimal love.

DENSITY

I  
feel  
crowded.  
Density  
is not space filling.  
A point between every two points  
will not let me touch,  
will not fill  
the gap.  
I'm  
trapped.