

# Poetry at the Library Series



## Josh Bell

### Poet of metaphysical inquiries in a daft American heartland

On Sunday, March 5, 2017 at 3:00 p.m, the Poetry at the Library Series hosts nationally acclaimed Josh Bell, author of two poetry collections, *Alamo Theory* (Copper Canyon, 2016) and *No Planets Strike* (Bison Books, 2008), who will read and discuss his work in the Main Library's Trustees' Room. Bell is admired for poetry that is frequently hilarious and self-deprecatory as he examines the world through both surreal and hyper-real lens, asking tough questions of identity, of masculinity, and of American culture and its outliers. A book signing and reception will follow the reading. This free event is sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

Praise for Josh Bell runs high. He is called "one of the most tonally versatile young poets working today," (*Boston Review*) and "a contemporary knockout," with poems that "run the gamut of good: they're seriously funny, bizarre, wry, ambitious, acrobatic, gorgeous. Sometimes they have zombies." (*Flavorwire*)

Cate Marvin notes how he pulls together craft and content: “Josh Bell’s fierceness of wit, his deft lyricism, his ability to swing adroitly between dictions high and low, combine to create a world that is savage and irreverent, yet fraught with longings spiritual and corporeal.” And Jorie Graham hears in Bell what she calls “the untranslatably American in our experience, as well as our language... a speaker who has seen too much, felt too much, who cannot bear much more, but who still believes in us, and in his job, enough to try to bring back an accurate report from the large and the small broken heart.”

Bell has recently published work in *Boston Review*, *The New Republic*, *The New Yorker*, and *Tin House*, as well as in the anthologies *Legitimate Dangers* (Sarabande), *Third Rail: The Poetry of Rock and Roll* (MTV Books), and *Before the Door of God: An Anthology of Devotional Poetry* (Yale). He holds an M.F.A. from the University of Iowa Writers’ Workshop and a Ph.D. in Creative Writing from the University of Cincinnati. He has been a member of the creative writing faculty at Columbia University and at the Iowa Writers’ Workshop and is currently Briggs Copeland Lecturer on English at Harvard University. Bell lives in Cambridge.

Join us for a greatly enjoyable afternoon with Josh Bell! And for some fascinating background about the poet, read his interview in *The Days of Yore* ([http://thedaysofyore.com/2010/josh\\_bell/](http://thedaysofyore.com/2010/josh_bell/)), a website that “interviews artists in the years before money, fame, or roadmaps to success, and inspires you to find your own.”