







MY TORONTO - POETIC GESTURE

**Lillian Allen
Poet Laureate**





**An' de beat of Toronto/ah rhythm an' ah sway
cannot wait to be embraced
This diverse alive in verse city
where trees grow around cement
New selves in concrete
Our feet against concrete
As we go about our ways
Percussion play echo echo echoing**

**Poets and artists gifting soul and soulfulness to
our City
we, learning to love what we have made, (This ya
Toronto Takaronto)
softening between brick and cement
a built-up world, steeples and stairs
glass mirrors**

sparing for social change

(Can you spare a little social change, pleeeeeease?)* X2







**New voices roasted enwrapped in ice
My mother walked from the plane into a fridge
That is Toronto in winter
“The best of times” she says “and the coldest of
times”**

**Incubating a whirl of creativity
And visionary relativities
Creativity swirl, cultural voices unfurl
Making us larger than we are becoming
Dub Poetry, Hip Hop, Opera,
Visual smarts and Community Arts**

Toronto in Excelsis!

**You Toronto are my water bottle
My arts thirst quencher
No matter how far I roam
You pull me back; wide-open arms
our union formed**

**An’ for those who lived strident
and have gone before
Let their names not be forgotten
but be called who they truly are
Lovers of Justice, standing for peace, not war.**



**And to all the battles fought
Freedom sought on the grounds of Queen's Park
and Nathan Phillips Square, City Hall
or the roar of communities at Young and Bloor
'down with inequality, injustice, brutality'
International Women's Day parade, Caribana jump
up
Salsa on St Clair, Scarborough Fest,
You have made our City strong
A republic of possibilities
A home to belong**

**And homelessness...is our little scar
That part split off
Lost, hiding, frightened, bruised, too tired to fight
Or resolved too soon
Just needing a way back ...*to the Promise. To the
Promise***

**We are trees standing in the water
“Fishing weir. Fishing weir”**



We are Kensington and Parkdale, Islington &
Elsmere,
Palmerston and Jane & Finch, Don Mills & Eglinton
We're East York, and High Park, Rexdale and Regent
Park
North York and Junction, Church & Wellesley with
unction!
Yes, we are Malvern and Morningside, Brimley and
Bellamy

.....

We are young, we are old
Potential, aching to unfold.

We are a three-million-sided heart

Oh yes, we are the “superman” Joe Schuster penned
to paper

An experiment splashed by the waves of Lake
Ontario

prancing for a great makeover

The postmodern-too-slow-a-nation

It was no slam-dunk from (William eytonP)

Hubbard(1894) to Zanana Akande (1990). -100 years

**We are our parklands, winding creeks, nature
preserves**

**We are free public spaces, ravines of lush graces
protected wetlands**

We are the Humber and the Don

“fishing weir”

**We are a thousand miles from our longings
Pinning dreams on over twenty thousand street
corners**

With still many bridges yet to cross-over

**But we are the beat, a city in heat
Alive, diverse, and strutting verse**

We are our peoples’ toil in this land

Together, our Dreams are alive in this land

Indigenous holding, healing us in this land

A three-million-sided heart is this land

We are Toronto

Toronto! Tkaronto

Resilient and strong