

# The Poetry of Turning Point: An Anthology of Work, Part II

*From June to July of 2017, residents of Santa Monica's Turning Point Shelter took part in Films & Poetry, a workshop facilitated by Women's Voices Now. Throughout these classes, residents watched films from WVN's archives, read poetry, then wrote original works. Following are a selection of poems from these workshops which the authors have allowed me to share with you. This is the second and final installment of the works completed by our participants at Turning Point. I look forward to meeting the second cohort of Turning Point workshop attendees in January 2018!*



Photo via [Wandering Rose](#).

## **An Eco Poem for Turning Point**

After watching a number of films addressing climate change from WVN's archives, we wrote and filmed our own Eco-Poem. Here is the text (below) and here is the footage:

Woodstock, crying, leaning

branches that hug you

Concrete that you glide

across to make it your own destination

Humans that you smile at  
because it looks good as  
a certain expression

Building that does not speak,  
talk, or move, but stares at  
you. with embracing gestures  
(Ashley Studabaker)

Stinkin' thinking  
Leave it at the door  
The carcass of who I used to  
be – putrid, rotting,  
lifeless on the floor  
Leavin' my chrysalis  
I start to soar  
(Amber Williamson)

The solidity of a tree  
The strength of its structure, adds  
balance, as it reaches up  
to the sky.

(Rene Smith)

There are many levels of mentalities  
at Turning Point, with different journeys.  
Stay on track. Don't turn back.  
Don't turn in. Don't turn out.

(James E. Sanders)

for Prince

The purple one is gone.....  
so young... so beautiful...  
still in his prime.

A kaleidoscope of magnificent jewels,  
his sweet falsetto ever-present in our memories,  
like a beautiful, clear mountain spring  
sparkling in the sunshine....  
a lark is on a tree beside the spring,  
singing the highest and sweetest tones –  
arpeggios, growling, husky bass notes to falsettos,  
yet with syncopation, holding out his notes,  
bends his notes with such funk  
like no other purple bird

(Sunshine)

Mist. Big leaved trees. Ocean air.

We are all animals, but

these folks are most elegant. See, Sherry's

cat-eye sunglasses.

(Ariel Fintushel)

We have a little garden that I have seen die and come back  
alive.

What will it be today

Will it look dry and wither away.

or will it be given a new life

by those who care

(Sherry)

### **A Poem by Ariel Fintushel**

*In closing, I present this poem for Turning Point. Thank you  
for so graciously welcoming me into your home.*



Image by Ariel Fintushel.

## A Poem for Turning Point

Press the gas and the speed dial turns;  
stars turn sending rays through space;  
a diamond turns in the mind –  
no one is a thief.

An acorn, finger, and compass turn  
without judgement; the fan blades turn  
cooling down the room;  
a pen turns, inking down the page  
where words appear for you to follow.

A point where what's wanted changes;  
difference of degrees changes a person.

The lemon tree's branch turns  
against a wall without fruit or leaves –  
where's it headed with no belongings?

At the base grows a plant;  
its red stem is turning green.