

# Periodical Poetry.

Poetry, periodically.

## What it Takes to Hear a Story

“Once you see the humanity in another, you can’t unsee it.”—Patty Mitchell

*For Passion Works Studio, who paints our community with the joy of the artists and their stories. The amount of beauty they add to Athens is unrivaled and adored.*

Catch the colors in the eyes  
of your neighbor. Let their sparkle  
spread like watercolors across the pages  
of your day. Find the melody

in the complaints of a stranger,  
let them know you too can carry  
a tune. See the flowers hiding  
in the scribbles of babies,

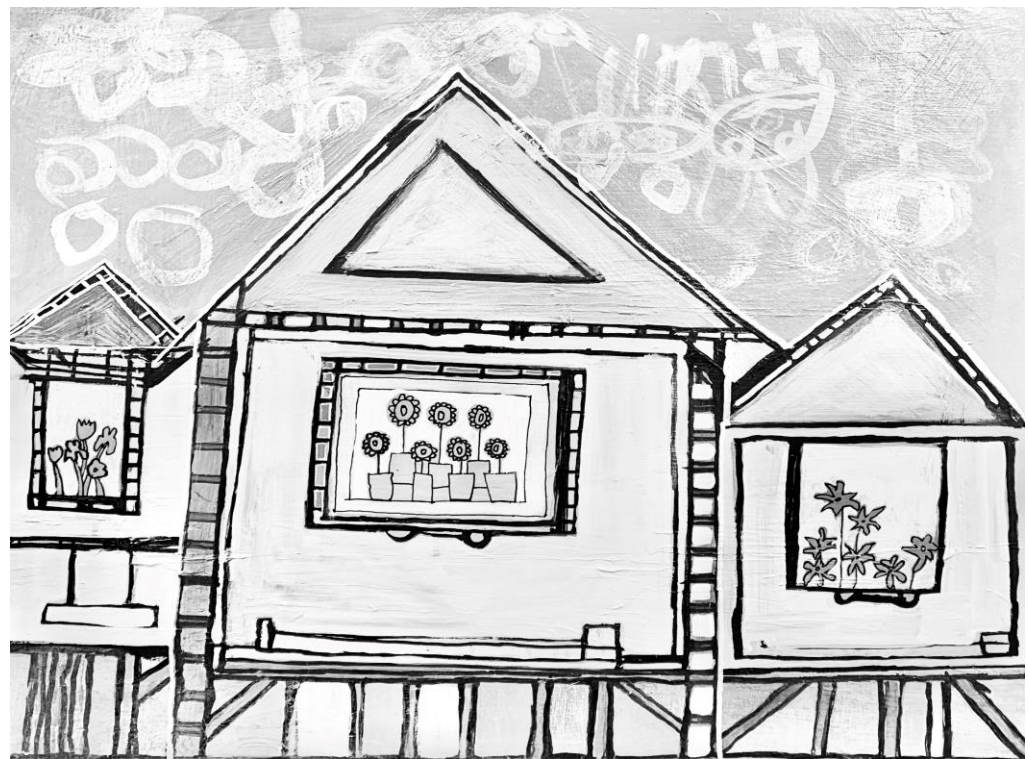
pluck them from their canvas,  
toss the petals like confetti, dance  
in the details of their dreams—  
even the scary ones, there is rhythm

in nightmares too, and bursts  
of joy when we remember  
how strong we are  
to rise again.

—Steph Kendrick, 2023

## Submit to Periodical Poetry!

Send 1-3 Poems and a 50-word bio to  
athenspoetlaureate4@gmail.com



Original artwork by Devin Warren. Add your own color and share by tagging Passion Works Studio!

## What does it take to tell a story?

Since January I’ve taken advantage of my role as Poet Laureate to create new relationships and build connections within this community. In March, our Wednesday night Open Mics started with a roar and continued to pack the bottom floor of Athens Uncorked on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month. It has been beautiful to watch friendships blossom in that room. We’ve had readers from West Virginia, California, students from Ohio University and folks who have never read in front of a crowd. Most exciting is to see writers from Athens County—folks I hadn’t yet met during my last 6 years navigating the local poetry scene, and who blew me away with their work. I’ve decided that there is a special ingredient in that room that ignites those new friendships and sense of community: *sharing*.

Poetry begs to be shared. This is present in its length (let’s not mention epics) and rhythm, and like a well-crafted joke, a poem’s structure and economy is a vessel for conveyance—a vessel for quick connection. There is power in the immediacy of a poem. Within 3-5 minutes (sometimes less), our readers open themselves to the listeners. This is trust. This is storytelling. Even when local poet and children’s lit

author-extraordinaire Patricia Black reads a poem from the perspective of a wandering snake being berated by a frantic eccentric homeowner, we learn something about Patricia. We laugh together and feel just as intrigued when the next reader renders us all to sympathetic tears.

In Issue 10, I have the pleasure of featuring Devin Warren, artist and writer at Passion Works Studio. Devin’s poem *What I Learned*, reminds us that there are roots to our stories—things we collect from those around us that eventually make up our identity. Devin honors those collections in his poem, and through that, honors those who taught him.

In April, I was able to work with local women in recovery through poetry. Several just lit up as they read their own renditions of the famed George Ella Lyon piece: *Where I’m From*. I admit I got giddy when a reader from my hometown opened her piece with, “I’m from Ski-pop.” It was at *that* moment that I, a girl from Jackson County, connected with this stranger. And that felt poetically powerful to me. Thank you for being here.

## Words & Wine on Wednesdays Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday

6:30-8:30 pm

Calling all poets, musicians and storytellers!  
Come share your work with the community.  
Share 1-2 poems/songs. Sign-up sheet available at  
the event.

**Athens Uncorked**

## Designated Space Every Tuesday

9:00pm

“Donkey’s own poetry, prose and spoken word  
open stage.”

**Donkey Coffee**

## Juneteenth Celebration Saturday, June 17th

10:00am-6:00pm

Live music, food, vendors and activities for kids!  
Black History Tour is followed by a Juneteenth  
Festival.

**Ohio University**

