

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2025 Soda City Poetry Festival One River, One Boat: Celebrating South Carolina's Poets

Columbia, South Carolina
June 12, 2025

The [2025 Soda City Poetry Festival](#) will be held June 27 and June 28 at [Richland Library Main](#). The theme of this year's festival gets its inspiration from former South Carolina Poet Laureate Marjory Wentworth's poem "[One River, One Boat](#)." Wentworth will be a featured poet in this event along with poets from the Lowcountry, Midlands, Pee Dee, and Upstate.

Wentworth is the most recent poet laureate of the state of South Carolina, proudly serving from 2003-2020. She resigned in 2020, and the governor of our state has yet to appoint a new laureate, although he was given a list of qualified finalists. This year's festival will continue to bring attention to this issue while celebrating poets throughout the state.

The festival includes poetry writing workshops, readings, and poetic conversations featuring poets such as Daniel Cross Turner, co-editor of the Coast Lines Poetry Anthology; MsTonya, a poet representing the Pee Dee region; and the River Poets. Programming will be available for all ages, including children and teenagers, such as Poetry Story Time and Kids in Print Poetic Conversation for children and an open mic for teens and a teen poetry workshop on songwriting. All of these events at Richland Library Main are free and open to the public.

The festival will end with South Carolina Poets Laureate Reading & Dinner, which is a ticketed event. Wentworth will be featured at this dinner along with other Poets Laureate from across the state including Greenville Poet Laureate Glenis Redmond, Charleston Poet Laureate A\$isahMae, Rock Hill Poet Laureate Carlo L'Chelle Dawson, Pee Dee Poet Laureate Jo Angela Edwins, City of Columbia Poet Laureate Jennifer Bartell Boykin, Poet Laureate of Georgetown County Libraries Marlanda Dekine, and former City of Columbia Poet Laureate Ed Madden. Seats are limited for this dinner, so register now on Eventbrite (<https://bit.ly/SCPFDinner>).

Current Poet Laureate of the City of Columbia Jennifer Bartell Boykin founded the Soda City Poetry Festival in 2024 to celebrate the vibrant poetry community in Columbia. The festival is one of her projects during her tenure as poet laureate. "We are keeping with the goal of the first festival as Columbia poets are still fueling this festival through teaching workshops and participating in Midlands Poetry Reading," says Bartell Boykin. "The programming at the library is free and for all people of all ages to experience; it is our hope that poets will come out to network and be in community with other poets. Where there is poetry, there is safety, and I want people to come and experience the freedom that comes with reading, writing, and listening to poetry."

"I could not be more excited about the 2025 Soda City Poetry Festival," says Xavier Blake, Executive Director of One Columbia for Arts & Culture. "Like last year, it will be a celebration of the power words and our talented poets across the state. We are looking forward to welcoming everyone to Columbia and look forward to seeing you at the festival this year."

The 2025 Soda City Poetry Festival is made possible by the generosity of The City of Columbia, Richland Library, One Columbia for Arts & Culture, and the following: "this opportunity is made possible through the Literary Arts Projects, a program of South Arts"; "this program is supported by South Carolina Humanities, a not-for-profit organization; inspiring, engaging and enriching South Carolinians with programs on literature, history, culture and heritage. SC Humanities receives funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities: *Democracy demands wisdom.*"

The mission of South Carolina Humanities is to enrich the cultural and intellectual lives of all South Carolinians. This not-for-profit organization presents and/or supports literary initiatives, lectures, exhibits, festivals, publications, oral history projects, videos and other humanities-based experiences that reach more than 250,000 citizens annually. South Carolina Humanities receives funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities as well as corporate, foundation, and individual donors. It is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors comprised of community leaders from throughout the state.

June 27-28, 2025
10. a.m.-4 p.m.
Richland Library Main
1431 Assembly Street
Columbia, SC 29229
Admission: FREE

SC Poets Laureate Dinner
June 28, 2025
7-9 p.m.
Koger Center Gallery
1051 Greene Street
Columbia, SC 29201
Admission: \$25
<https://bit.ly/SCPFDinner>

Press Contact:
Jennifer Bartell Boykin
info@sodacitypoetry.org
843-625-0822
www.sodacitypoetryfestival.com
[@sodacitypoetryfestival.com](https://www.instagram.com/sodacitypoetryfestival.com)



Save the date!
June 27-28, 2025
 The Soda City
 Poetry Festival
 returns!

