



KALAMAZOO POETRY FESTIVAL



JUNE 2025

What do we have coming up this month?

Ampersee Workshop 2, IPS, June 18

***Not open to public**

**The Institute of Public Scholarship
Third Friday Open Mic, June 20
@7:30pm**

313 N. Burdick St, Kalamazoo, MI 49007

**Doormouse Theatre
Last Wednesday Open Mic, June 25
@7:30pm**

1103 Portage St. Kalamazoo, MI 49001

**Rambling Read, Kazoo Books, June 27
6-8pm**

2413 Parkview Ave, Kalamazoo, MI 49008

All Things Possible Session 1

***Not open to public**

THIS FRIDAY!

CHECK OUT OUR PARTNER OPEN MIC!

JUNE 20. 2025

**3RD
FRIDAY
OPEN
MIC**

AT

Legacy.



FEATURING

**DEVYN
DRAB
D-RAB**

IF YOU'RE SPICY

313 NORTH BURDICK ST, KALAMAZOO



7:30 - 9 PM

\$1 - \$5 SUGGESTED DONATION



VIBE SETTER
DJ DISOBEDIENCE

OPEN MIC HOST
DENISE MILLER

WWW.THEIPSNOW.ORG

**Who is The Institute of Public
Scholarship?**

Proudly Presenting an Open Mic Night Featuring

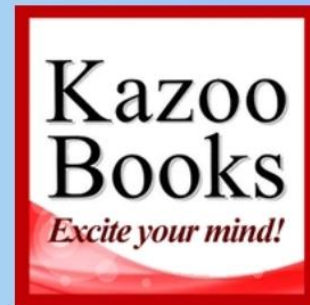


Hopie Joe



Kristen Field

Kazoo Books 2413 Parkview Avenue Friday, June 27th 6:00 pm





Hopie Jo is a gender-fluid singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist with over a decade of experience performing music around the US Midwest and Pacific Northwest. Named appropriately for their fun and quirky stage presence, Hopie's music is expressive, whimsical, and playful with streaks of sadness and deep vulnerability. With nature-focused themes and emotive lyrics, Hopie invites themselves and us all on the journey toward self-acceptance and self-love. Her more recent work has been described by friends as meditative and spacious, allowing the listener to step into the present moment. You will find this guy crooning right into your heart!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!
Air Poetry, Kazoo Books
August 23 2025, 4pm-6pm
Performers TBD
***Poetry**
***Music**
***Food**



FESTIVAL FINALE 2025 GROUP POEM

I came to, and through the curtain he said,
"When did you decide to stay?"

I think of yesterday smiles, mom and dad,
today's tears mark time in tender tomorrows.

I decide not to decide. Which is a decision. I'll
wait and listen to something shadowy,
something mysterious, whatever bubbles up.

Nighttime, and the light that night ignites.

I love to watch those pockets of air bloom into
voluptuous velum velociraptors desperately desiring death.

I bite the air and swallow it whole.
My stomach fills with the color of blue.

I pretend-
can you pretend it's not happening?

Like time passing, pretending only serves until you're
forced to pay attention.



PRIDE 2025

Thanks for tabling with us Friends! (Check out their chapbook contest!)

PRIDE 2025 GROUP POEM!

PRIDE GROUP POEM

Lean on your team.
Community will come through your dreams.
Today is the day to enjoy ourselves,
to love one another, I hope.

You don't have to be good.
You just have to try.
Do crime. Be gay.
Be sneaky. Be sly.

Find the people who feel like home.
Be okay with the unknown.

Build community by listening.
No voice is too small.
Even whispers hold meaning.
Your suffering bears strength—
as much as your talent and beauty.

Make your voice heard.
You are enough.
Your story will echo through generations.
A legacy of hope.
Love yourself and be true.

It feels good to punch the keys.
Punching keys to the beat,
loving tones, tasting life.
We all share words.
Dance for everyone watching.

Support love.
It isn't every day
that we can celebrate together.
I love you forever for who you are.
You are the best, don't fucking forget it.

I don't know you,
but I love you.
I may be tough and strong,
still a jester among kings,
making jest for those who gaze upon me.

I really didn't expect the day to go this way—
but it was better than I imagined.

But I am hungry.
And yet, not thirsty—
quenched by the company.
I remember how red life is.

Forget your sadness.
Know you are cherished.
Stay very gay—every day.

Slay baddies.
You deserve the world.
The world deserves you.
You shine like a diamond.

Another year, another slay.
And then she rose—
boys, girls, neithers, boths,
and in-betweens.

A pen should be used to scream,
to shout,
to rage.

Live like Larry.
Choose yourself first.
Make the world a better place—
make it a safe space.

If I were a bird, would I be free?
Rest deep in the wool.
A mushroom.

You can't hide us.
Find us outside our closets.
Living through each other's eyes.

Beyond the decaying chrysalis—
love is my superpower.
I love poetry too much.
Pride slayer, dancing in my dreams.

Love is found in the dreams of a child.
It starts with a dream—make it a good one.
Be you.
The world is better with you in it.

Never talk to the cops,
they'll screw you without lube.
Trust only your fist.
The police will not help you.

**THE YWCA KALAMAZOO PARTNERSHIP WAS A SUCCESS, AND
IT WAS AWESOME TO SEE WHAT THE PARTICIPANTS CAME UP
WITH. KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN FOR OUR LIMITED RUN OF
TSHIRTS THAT WERE GENERATED BY THIS EVENT! YOU CAN
SNAG YOUR OWN AT FUTURE KPF EVENTS!**

YWCA KALAMAZOO



Mom
you saw the poet in me,
but I never saw her
She doubted herself for years
and feared the what if's
Before you left this realm,
you always assured me that
I'm an amazing writer/poet.
Because of you
I'm going to face
to share one of
I dedicate this
MOST POWERFUL
I KNOW — M

I have walked through storms
lightning scarred, but hope held on.
Grace poured from rain!!!

Alana B

MONOFORM CINEMA



MONOFORM EVENT GROUP POEM

The only way out is through
that seemed to be, seems to me,
the thing the folks walking the
train tracks ahead of me were
talking about/alluding to that
one fast moment choo chooing into
the tunnel of our fallen-
love mistaken-
truth left unhinged-
a broken tooth and whispered cringe.

So now I sing at the bridge to anything,
everything worth bringing already on my back.

So heavy this load for a fragile soul- and
I lay still as my mother in my white dress
roses all around, always fake roses, always
only fake roses.

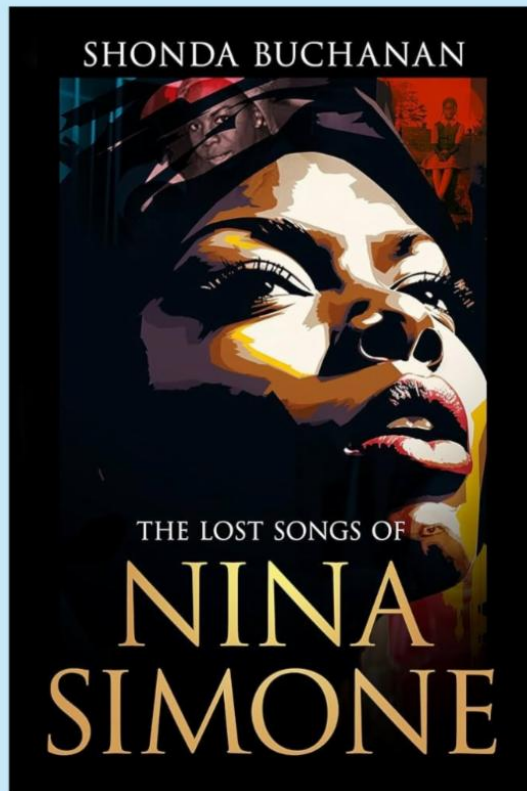
Real roses grow around them.

Noone will really see me.

I am a wound and a sword,
a victim and an executioner.

Branches full of birds.

ON A FINAL NOTE!



Board Member Spotlight

Shonda Buchanan is an award-winning poet, memoirist, and educator who focuses on the intersections of race, identity, migration, landscape, and language. Born and raised in Kalamazoo, she is author of *Black Indian* (2019), chosen as one of the PBS NewsHour's top 20 books about institutional racism.



**Hear Shonda
Read!**



**SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR
US!**

Kalamazoo Poetry Festival | P.O. Box 19621 | Kalamazoo, MI 49019-9621 US

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