



Stories Sought for the People's State of the Union Story Circle event at The Parrish

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by Hamptons Art Hub Staff

The Parrish Art Museum is inviting the East End community to share their personal stories revealing their thoughts on America as part of the nationwide "People's State of the Union" story circle event on Friday, January 27, at 6 p.m. Part of a national project launched and encouraged by an artist collective, stories gathered at the Parrish will join those told at hundreds of similar events taking place across the country in the next few weeks. Stories will be compiled and shared online. Invited poets for the project as a whole will then create an open Poetric Address based on the recorded stories.

At the [Parrish](#), stories will be shared in groups of eight participants and led by a moderator. Stories will not only be shared with poets that are part of the national project but with local ones. For the Parrish event, area poets have been invited to create individual works to be shared at a special Parrish event held in April 2017.

The "People's State of the Union" story circle event is open to East End residents who are 15 years old and older. No preparation is necessary and it is free. Participants expected include artists, therapists, poets, veterans, educators, and community leaders.

"The Story Circle aims to create a space for sharing and listening and to bring together our communities at the Parrish," said [Corinne Erni](#), Curator of Special Projects at the Parrish. "It is open to everyone who cares about the condition of our nation and wants to have a voice, and we encourage all members of the community to participate."

"People's State of the Union" is an annual civic tradition rooted in the belief that democracy is a conversation, not a monologue, according to founding artist collective [U.S. Department of Arts and Culture \(USDAC\)](#). Not necessarily political, the event is geared to take the temperature of life in America through personal stories that take the pulse from individuals versus a government point of view that's offered by the ruling political body.

USDAC is not an official agency and is not affiliated, in any way, with the federal government. The USDAC defines itself as "a people-powered movement dedicated to cultivating empathy, equity, and social imagination."

Between January 27 and February 5, 2017, hundreds of individuals and organizations across the United States are expected to host story circles as part of its annual "People's State of the Union"

storytelling project. Afterwards, stories and images will be uploaded to an online platform, yielding a body of work that can be searched and shared, inspiring new ideas and new actions, according to USDAC.

For the national project, invited poets will create a Poetic Address that will be performed and broadcast on March 11, 2017 at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco.

[The Parrish](#) offers a little something extra for poets at its event. In addition to participating in the national project, the Parrish invited poets from the East End to compose individual works inspired by the stories. These poems will be read during an event on April 7, 2017 held at the museum.

BASIC FACTS: “Story Circle: USDAC People’s State of the Union” takes place on Friday, January 27, 2017 at 6 p.m. at the Parrish Art Museum. Admission is free. Reservations are required at www.parrishart.org or by emailing info@parrishart.org. The Parrish Art Museum is located at 279 Montauk Hwy, Water Mill, NY 11976. www.parrishart.org.

For information on U.S. Department of Arts and Culture” (USDAC), visit www.usdac.us.

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