

Sidewalk Poetry In Madison Comes Home

August 17, 2016

Today a poem was placed into fresh cement in the sidewalk in front of our home. In 2011 I started championing this project for Madison. I have also always recalled the words from Chris Rickert who found local poets being showcased this way to be a sound idea.

From the start I said this was a great way to lift the spirit of Madison, one step at a time. (Bad pun!) Placing poetry into the sidewalk is a grand way to show this city is unique and set apart due to the make-up of our residents, the diversity of our thoughts, and the loftier goals we seek to attain.

The cost for these poems around the city (and six new ones this week in the neighborhood where I live) is minimal. Once the street reconstruction project was announced, along with poems to be placed, James and I worked to make sure one was pressed into cement at our home. We really wanted the poem about water to be here as the lake is most special. I snapped some photos of the project being completed today. The poem faces Lake Monona as walkers read it. I have also included a photo of the poet.

*Wisconsin, like water
freezes hard, so thick you can
cross it in winter
every inch
cracking, cries in springsplintering
lakes don't quiet change
their states
rises from every mouth, convergence
of neighbors'
mingled breath.*

Wendy Vardaman





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