

*A Humming Birds Dance* by Rosetta Peters

Reviewed by Clay Pietan (Literary Arts 2025)

*A Humming Birds Dance* by Rosetta Peters is the kind of book that you can pick up and put down but will always end up coming back to. Her collection of poetry and short writings that make up this book, hold stories of depth, vulnerability, and beauty. It is an absolute honor to bear witness the work of Rosetta Peters, and be given the opportunity to take a look into the mind of such a raw and kind spirit. Because not only is she a writer, but a healer and a teacher. She is many things and more, a truly whole person, who has had to go through a whole lot to be where she is now. With her work, she shares the gift of exposing the deep, good and bad, strenuous living experience that we as humans have to endure everyday. And to that she says “Okay. Breath.” But along with the overall depthness she is so intricately able to captivate in this book, she tunes in aspects of nature, and waves of elements, connecting herself to the earth in which we come from. That is truly what makes this such a beautiful piece, and such an alluring read. Once you read the first page, and even after the whole book, you'll still be left wanting more, it is a must read.

When I first was introduced to her and her work, I didn't expect what would come out of it at all. I had been invited to a spoken word poetry performance of a person I didn't even know anything about. And even though I was interested in writing, I hadn't ever been to a spoken word performance, so I didn't know what to expect. But there she was, with a flower in her hair surrounded by a full set audience. I observed her from the crowd, and immediately noticed her calm and genuine demeanor. In a soft voice, she spoke with strength. Behind her sat a man with a guitar, backing her up with angelic

sounds as she continued to read from her piece, “A Humming Birds Dance.” It was so dynamic, the whole thing. She’d go from almost whispering, to shouting, pronouncing her words with such detail. All while keeping a steady rhythm, keeping intact a wonderful flow of speaking and strumming with the guitar. I was so awestruck, it was almost too much. I’m glad I got a copy of her printed piece! But besides that, the performance truly showed me that there is more to writing than just paper. You can be as magnificent as Rosetta and perform it to a live audience, but in such a way as she did.

Another way I got to experience the vastness of the writing world was through sharing one of my own pieces. At the end of the show, Rosetta handed the mic off to anyone who wanted to share their own piece. I knew that this was an opportunity I should take hold of, so I did. With the little courage mixed with the bundles of excitement I had, I got up on stage to do something I had never done before. And it was awesome.

That night I was introduced to so much. I got to experience my first poetry performance, which I will never forget. I learned as a young writer there are many ways that I can express the pieces that I have written, and Rosetta Peters inspired me to want to do that! It's all thanks to her. It was really important for me to learn about another artist, who is from Minnesota. And to read work that actually speaks to me such as *The Hummingbirds Dance*, and well, that is worth it.

So after that night and once I had my own copy of her work, I was able to read everything that she had performed, and fully process it. That was when I really became interested in her and the work she has done. I was perplexed and so touched by her writing that after picking up the copy, I couldn't stop. I think I read it all in one.

What it was that I was so perplexed by was, the truth in her words, so raw and vulnerable. She is an artist you can rely on to keep you always attentive. As someone who is not a big reader myself, that is something I struggle with when reading. But not with this, you won't be catching yourself having to read a line over and over again because you don't get it. That's the beauty in it, her words actually make you feel something.

She speaks on the topics of grief and loss quite a bit. She writes throughout her book about her battle with PTSD and trauma. She writes on her experiences of depression and anxiety, and being someone who has experienced substance abuse, and in her family. Now that isn't all that she writes about, but what she did write about on those subjects, I found to be quite valuable. I've kept that close to my heart. She is vulnerable with us, but also like a teacher. She is angry and miserable, but yet okay. She had healed her battle wounds, but it's taken her time to get to that point, and she completely expresses that to us. It is nice to be able to read from someone who has been so wronged, who has been broken, but who is also healing. While she is healing her wounds, she allows us as readers to heal ours, all through the magic and beauty of her words. She guides us through her paper maze of intricate, jaw dropping, all enchanting poetry and once you've gone through, you feel like you want more, but yet are still satisfied.

For me some works of literature don't do that, I've read things that don't leave any sort of mark or affect on me, but with *A Humming Birds Dance* you do. So I encourage you to read this, because I know for a fact you won't regret it...