

Anne Spencer (1882 – 1975)

Anne Spencer was an African American poet, teacher, librarian, and civil rights activist who devoted her life to improving social and economic conditions for the Black community. Alongside this important work, Spencer was also a gardener. Her home garden in Lynchburg, Virginia, grew more than plants—it nurtured ideas.

Spencer was a figure of the Harlem Renaissance, a cultural and artistic movement that celebrated the artistic contributions of Black Americans during the 1920s and 30s. During this time, Jim Crow laws barred Black citizens from inns, so Spencer and her husband opened their home and garden as a gathering place. It grew into a hub for prominent thought leaders, writers, and activists including W.E.B. Du Bois, Langston Hughes, Paul Robeson, and Thurgood Marshall. A writer herself, Spencer also drew inspiration from her garden. Her poetry centered on themes of religion, mythology, and nature. She became the first African American woman poet featured in the *Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry* (1973).



Today, the Anne Spencer Home & Garden Museum stands as a testament to Spencer's passion for gardening and her role in fostering space for African American artistic and intellectual expression during a pivotal period in American history. The property, which includes a two-story Queen Anne-style house and a writing cottage and garden known as Edankraal, is recognized as a National Historic Landmark. Thanks to restoration work led by the Hillside Garden Club, the garden retains the qualities that made it such an important and inspirational place in Spencer's time.

ABOUT THE ARTIST | Digi Chivetta

Digi Chivetta is an artist, writer, and singer whose practice spans various media, including painting, digital art, and storytelling. Her work has been exhibited at the Fitchburg Art Museum and includes public art installations such as the mural at the Fitchburg Abolitionist Park. Digi's art often reflects her passion for themes of identity, empowerment, and the spiritual journey, offering viewers a lens through which to explore their own paths. Alongside her art practice, she shares her unique journaling techniques through her Patreon, helping others harness creativity for introspection and personal growth.

Spanish translation coming soon.