

DOWNLOAD PDF VOICE ACTIVATED : CONTEMPORARY ACADEMIC POETRY READINGS TO THE NATIONAL POETRY SLAM

Chapter 1 : How to Read a Poem | Academy of American Poets

Introduction: voice identification --Sounding poetic voice --Edna St. Vincent Millay's performance of presence --Voice and the visual poetry of Langston Hughes --Lyric collaborations: James Merrill, David Jackson, Denise Duhamel, and Maureen Seaton --Voice activated: contemporary academic poetry readings to the National Poetry Slam.

History[edit] Spoken word has existed for many years. Long before writing, through a cycle of practicing, listening and memorizing, each language drew on its resources of sound structure for aural patterns that made spoken poetry very different from ordinary discourse and easier to commit to memory. Eliot that "poetry remains one person talking to another". In African culture, performance poetry is a part of theatrics, which was present in all aspects of pre-colonial African life [14] and whose theatrical ceremonies had many different functions: Poetics were an element of theatrical performances of local oral artists, linguists and historians, accompanied by local instruments of the people such as the kora , the xalam , the mbira and the djembe drum. Drumming for accompaniment is not to be confused with performances of the "talking drum", which is a literature of its own, since it is a distinct method of communication that depends on conveying meaning through non-musical grammatical, tonal and rhythmic rules imitating speech. In ancient Greece , the spoken word was the most trusted repository for the best of their thought, and inducements would be offered to men such as the rhapsodes who set themselves the task of developing minds capable of retaining and voices capable of communicating the treasures of their culture. Langston Hughes and writers of the Harlem Renaissance were inspired by the feelings of the blues and spirituals , hip-hop , and slam poetry artists were inspired by poets such as Hughes in their word stylings. American poet Marc Smith is credited with starting the poetry slam in November The poets associated with the Buffalo Readings were active early in the 21st century. In , the movement reached its peak in France with Fabien Marsaud aka Grand Corp Malade being a forerunner of the genre. In Trinidad and Tobago , this art form is widely used as a form of social commentary and is displayed all throughout the nation at all times of the year. The main poetry events in Trinidad and Tobago are overseen by an organization called the 2 Cent Movement. This organization also hosts poetry slams and workshops for primary and secondary schools. It is also involved in social work and issues. In Kenya , there is an annual Poetry Slam. Competitions[edit] Spoken-word poetry is often performed in a competitive setting. Movement[edit] Spoken-word poetry is typically more than a hobby or expression of talent. This art form is often used to convey important or controversial messages to society. Such messages often include topics such as: Slam poetry competitions often feature loud and radical poems that display both intense content and sound. Spoken-word poetry is also abundant on college campuses, YouTube, and through forums such as Button Poetry.

DOWNLOAD PDF VOICE ACTIVATED : CONTEMPORARY ACADEMIC POETRY READINGS TO THE NATIONAL POETRY SLAM

Chapter 2 : The Women of the World Poetry Slam Comes to Brooklyn | Literary Hub

Spoken word is one form of poetry that is specifically written to be performed. Spoken word, performance poetry, and slam poetry (spoken word performed for a live audience as part of a competition) often serves as a universal, socially-charged voice.

And Pauline Wu for the artwork Tetahi atu he mihi mahana ki a katoa Another warm greeting to all. In this, my last commentary post of this series “ apart from a brief Coda next week “ I want to talk about two distinct areas of the Aotearoa-New Zealand poetry scene that I have alluded to previously, but not really covered copiously as yet. One is the vital and brimming Poetry Slam situation in this multicultural land “ a scene that is really expanding fast, most particularly among younger poets, and certainly among Polynesian poets who tend not to live in stuffy urban areas, but more likely in places like Mangere, where I grew up. Now, I was going to write much more here, but all of my contacts apologized for a variety of reasons: Grace Tueila Taylor below , a particularly significant instigator of live slam-poetry group performances, think South Auckland Poets Collective and Rising Voices , has been rather ill and very busy with her new drama production, My Own Darling. She was, then, unavailable. He too, was occupied with other things. I will write much more on this scene at a later date, not too far away. An irony in the list is that some of the male poets are mates of mine, so I cannot be overly critical of such a list, eh “ especially as they are actually rather good English language poets! I received very good support from Creative Communities for that “ running poetry competitions, producing an annual publication, attracting significant guest poets to Upper Hutt and also profiling local poets. Wairarapa Word gets a lot of information-dissemination from the sterling organisational efforts of Madeleine Marie Slavick; the Tauranga Writers Group , similarly from Jenny Argante, also editor of Freelance magazine. Provincial New Zealand is indeed blessed by having these committed individuals promoting poetry per se “ Te Aroha, for example, now has its own monthly gathering as initiated by John Mullon and Josie Ashworth, while there are similar local hui all over the skinny country, from Whangarei to Bluff. These groups appear to be largely self-referential “ although I could be wrong about this “ with the personal observation-based poem that so many people are impelled to write taking off in that environment like pingao grass at the beach. One such example of sterling input is the invaluable Poetry Archive of New Zealand. There are more good poets than people realize reading mainstream historical anthologies of New Zealand poetry. Stanley Sherratt have had their work republished. Another is Paula Green , a mighty voice for a wide cross-section of poets in the country via her two colourful and optimistic blogs, Poetry Shelf and New Zealand Poetry Box. It features interviews, reviews, poems, occasional pieces on poetry along with details of events, awards, and poetry news. I established the blog in response to the paucity of poetry reviews in national media. It seemed harder and harder to keep a finger on a poetry pulse beyond local communities. My aim was to create a forum for poetry without attachment to a singular institution and to maintain an eclectic approach rather than form a club with limitations. Thus, I showcase a range of poets from a range of geographical locations, cultural backgrounds, university attachments or not who are writing in a range of styles. That I run this blog without external assistance gives me the delicious freedom to write however and whatever I like. When I feature a poet or a poetry book in depth, it has to matter to me. I have to love it some way because my motivation as a writer is to build rather than tear apart this was a subterranean objective in my Doctoral thesis. When I cast an eye across the New Zealand poetry landscape, I fall upon vital hubs of activity “ little poetry communities that nourish cities and towns. Mainstream presses and boutique presses are producing outstanding poetry. The schedule of events on National Poetry Day demonstrates the inventive reach of poetry. Yet only a handful of bookshops usually independent stock New Zealand poetry to a satisfactory degree and only a handful of print-media outlets feature new poetry books. Paula Green does not merely munch on the marshmallow in the middle, but chews on the coverings outside. She also pens damned good poems too “ as located below. My aim is to create a poetry buzz in New Zealand classrooms and families, and spark children

DOWNLOAD PDF VOICE ACTIVATED : CONTEMPORARY ACADEMIC POETRY READINGS TO THE NATIONAL POETRY SLAM

to fall in love with the possibilities of words. I post poems, poetry tips, reviews and interviews, and set challenges. Again, without external support, I am able to run this blog with absolute freedom. I now mention Laurice Gilbert, a Wellington-based poetry zealot. And like all of these hard-working verse toilers, she is so self-effacingly modest too. I know this from personal experience of her positive editorship of my manifestly non-mainstream work, eh. Irene organised a meeting at her home to talk about setting up a regular event for poets to share work. The Inaugural General Meeting at The Wellington Settlement in May unanimously elected Irene as the first President, and she remained in that position until , returning in , , and I feel truly honoured to have followed in the footsteps of such an illustrious line-up. The [NZPS] website was started by Margaret Vos in the early 00s as a Yahoo group and gradually developed into a resource-rich independent site visited from around the world. Our website-based connection with the international haiku community, established in and ably managed by Sandra Simpson, added more visitors to the site from many diverse countries, and we average over unique visitors every month – more in competition season. Our mission to promote, develop and support New Zealand poets and poetry is very well-served in this way. I soon proved to be inept at fundraising and gave that up, taking a pay cut in the process. I was already running the annual competition, which is self-funded, and added overseeing the production, sales and distribution of the anthology to my workload. All in all, what was a sixteen-hour a week job when I started became almost full-time, with a significant number of extra hours around the end of the competition. Despite the increased workload as time went on, I loved the job, as evidenced by my carrying on doing it at a pay rate that made the minimum wage look overly generous. However, once I reached the seven year mark, I was ready for a break. It was time to look for another solution, and I resigned as National Coordinator after the annual anthology launch in November , standing down as President at the AGM. I have been delighted to be replaced by Lonnard Dean Watkins, a stalwart in the local performance poetry scene, and he is gradually making more and more connections with the performance and slam communities. A poem from Laurice lies below too. It is not as though she feels pain. It feels draughty and she has goose bumps so she starts to count bits of sky until she reaches a hundred. She keeps grabbing hold of things hanging in the air in fits and starts – violins, chestnuts, a field of clovers, black and white tiles, exotic colours that fade and scatter, a deep blue that whispers impractical poems.

DOWNLOAD PDF VOICE ACTIVATED : CONTEMPORARY ACADEMIC POETRY READINGS TO THE NATIONAL POETRY SLAM

Chapter 3 : Slam Poetry - theinnatdunvilla.com

I will attempt to lead students through a discovery of the performance poetry of the past and allow them to draw their own conclusions as we study the modern poetry slam and the spoken word revolution, which is a part of this modern poetry movement.

Comment Poetry slam, a relatively new phenomenon in the United States, emerged out of inner Slam Poetry and the Poetry Slam: A Research Guide Rebekah J. Since that time, poetry slam has made its way into mainstream America, attracting diverse crowds and avid followers. A poetry slam, by definition, is a live competition in which poets perform original poetry and are judged by preselected audience members. The focus of poetry slam is not the written word; rather, it is a celebration of the art of oral interpretation and performance with emphasis on the interaction between the poet and the audience. This term, however, is appropriate, especially considering the poetry that emerges from each slam competition slam poetry. It is this relationship between slam poetry and community that merits and attracts research and recognition within academia. Through slam poetry, one can track the evolution of modern American culture, not through passive observation, but through the words of the individuals themselves. This bibliography serves as a guide to faculty, students, as well as anyone outside of academia who desires quality information on slam poetry and the poetry slam. This bibliography also serves as a core list of important resources and therefore can be helpful in developing a collection on the topic. Careful selection of materials for this guide was necessary considering the scarcity of specified information on this particular subject as well as the lack of research guides covering this topic. Contained in this research guide are print and non-print resources ranging from scholarly articles and books to audiovisual and web resources. The resources are categorized by material type and arranged chronologically by publication date within each section to illustrate the constant evolution of poetry slam and the increasingly academic nature of the materials. Reference Materials Reference materials are valuable resources, especially in the beginning stages of the research process, as they provide a basis of fundamental information on a given topic. Since there is no reference book devoted specifically to poetry slam, individual articles have been selected all of which offer basic scholarly information on the poetry slam and slam poetry. While each of the following articles could stand alone based on individual intrinsic value, collectively, the articles offer a multi-perspective and more comprehensive examination of the topic. Crown divides performance poetry into two distinct categories: This article provides extensive information on the influences of poetry slam as well as significant individuals and venues associated with the movement. Facts on File Inc. This article gives a basic definition for slam poetry and provides a context for slam poetry by describing various preexisting and related models of performance poetry. This article focuses on the historical evolution of performance poetry. Hadfield presents a timeline of performance poetry movements with detailed information on the corresponding stylistic changes. Books and Book Chapters With origins outside of print culture, the recent and rapid increase of monographs published on this topic illustrates the incorporation of slam poetry into a media generally associated with academia. The intention of this section is not to provide anthologies or collections of slam poetry; rather, the following books and individual book chapters were chosen with the intention of providing scholarly information about poetry slam and slam poetry. The materials were examined and selected using a number of tools and methods such as WorldCat, book reviews, citation analysis, and bibliographies found in related monographs, journal articles, and encyclopedia articles. Poetry n the Public Spear: Slams, Open Readings, and Dissident Traditions. Poetry and the Performed Word, edited by Charles Bernstein, Oxford University Press, Damon examines slams and open-mike readings as poetic forms of public discourse that defy traditional poetic definitions. The Competitive Art of Performance Poetry. Distributed to the trade by Publishers Group West, This publication provides a series of commentaries from noted slam poets such as Bob Holman, Patricia Smith, and Taylor Mali. General topics discussed include the origins, rules, formats, and the atmosphere of slam competitions. The Spoken Word Revolution: Editor

DOWNLOAD PDF VOICE ACTIVATED : CONTEMPORARY ACADEMIC POETRY READINGS TO THE NATIONAL POETRY SLAM

Eleveld and poetry slam creator Marc Kelly Smith trace the evolution of spoken word poetry through various forms including beat poetry, rap, hip-hop, slam, Nuyorican, Taos, and youth poetry. While providing a context for slam poetry, Eleveld celebrates the energy, creativity, and influence of spoken word poetry within the macrocosm of poetics. *The Civil Disobedience of Poetry Slams*. Hauser and Amy Grim, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, *Blitefield* explores the significant similarities between slam poetry and ancient lyric poetry. Marc Kelly Smith, founder of poetry slam, offers the most comprehensive book on slam poetry with extensive information on the history of slam poetry including the individuals and venues that make up the slam community. Smith also offers in-depth technical information on the composition and performance of slam poetry as well as the organization of slam competitions. *Journal Articles* Although the quantity of scholarly journal articles on slam poetry is considerably small, the number of articles has recently been increasing indicating the gradual growth of recognition of slam poetry among the academic research community. *The Stage on the Page*. This collaborative collection of articles, poetry, and an interview is the only scholarly material written about slam poetry prior to and thus deserves recognition. In the introduction, Barry Sileskey comments briefly on the history, increasing popularity, and debated literary value of slam poetry. *Some Notes on Performance*. Henry Taylor, a perceived academic formalist and self proclaimed pseudo formalist discusses his personal experience with formal academic poetry readings and slam competitions. While formal poetry readings elicit the perception of literary value and lack 5 confrontational criticism or judgment, slam poetry welcomes judgment and aims to provide immediate pleasure to its audiences. This is a candid and most unusual interview with a seemingly irate Marc Smith. *Poetry, Performance and the New American Revolution*. Rodriguez comments on the increasing tendency of poetry to cross genre boundaries into other art forms including music, theater, video, and dance. Due to this relationship, preconceptions are challenged and distinctions between what was once either academic poetry or performance poetry are blurred. Bruce and Davis introduce the article by commenting on the fact that the current education system promotes structural and systemic violence in a culturally, ethnically, and personally diverse society. Bruce and Davis provide a possible method to prevent violence at the institutional and individual level by embracing a non-violent curriculum where students are able to voice their opinions through slam poetry. Bruce and Davis suggest that self-expression through slam poetry will allow students to identify and 6 convey their thoughts and feelings through spoken word rather than internal or external acts of violence. Hoffman examines the use of humor in slam poetry as a means for deconstructing social hierarchies. *A History of the Poetry Slam*. *A Journal of Contemporary Poetry and Poetics* Schmid addresses the history of slam as it spread geographically and diverged into a multimedia phenomenon. *Cultural Critique through Spoken Word*. This paper examines the spoken word movement as a facilitator in identity development for disenfranchised youth. With the support of adult poets, high school teachers, and organizations such as Youth Speaks in San Francisco , young individuals are able to manipulate language through and incorporate personal experience into their poetry. Belle offers a brief article discussing the quality of slam poetry as a poetic form that emphasizes the combination of art and performance rather than the written word. The accessibility and communal aesthetics of slam poetry are thus enabling the gap between it and academia to shrink. *Poetry at the End of Print Culture*. Gioia categorizes slam as one of several forms of performance poetry to develop amidst a modern, technology-based culture where print material is just one of many options for information transmission. Rather, slam poetry is an urban phenomenon relying on competitive oral performance. As with other forms of performance poetry cowboy poetry and hip-hop , slam has characteristically revived traditionally formal auditory techniques and has flourished due to popular appeal. *The Common Language of Poetry*. This article describes a workshop on slam poetry and suggests that its use in the classroom will foster a better understanding of and connection to the poetry itself. Sommers-Willett explores the relationship between the poet and audience at slam competitions, especially the criterion used by audience members to evaluate the poem and, more importantly, the poet. The following dissertations were found using ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. They provide current and historical information about slam poetry from both literary and social

DOWNLOAD PDF VOICE ACTIVATED : CONTEMPORARY ACADEMIC POETRY READINGS TO THE NATIONAL POETRY SLAM

perspectives. Harrington, John Joseph, Ph. Pihel, Erik Rein, Ph. *Toward an Aesthetics of Popular Art. Public Poetry as a Community Art.* Schmid explores the evolving nature of poetry through examination of the following contemporary performance poets: Low, Bronwen Elisabeth, Ph. This study explores the evolutionary nature of language and communication through the spoken word forms of slam poetry and rap. Low argues that popular youth cultures manifest and guide the evolution of language and communication, especially in a progressive society influenced by cultural and technological developments. *A Performance Ethnography of Poetry Slams.* Sibley investigates the organizational culture of poetry slams as events that combine spoken and written word in a social context. This study examines the events, poets, and performances from four poetry slams that took place in June and July of in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Through this examination, Sibley aims to outline the distinguishing features of poetry slams that create meaning for those who participate. *Performance, Black Identity, and Slam Poetry.* This study explores the actualization and authentication of marginal identities through slam poetry. Sommers-Willett focuses on the relationship between African American poets and white middle-class audiences. Maddalena, Cheryl Jean Psy. This study investigates the psychological benefits of performing poetry. Specifically, Maddalena questions the relationship between participation in slam competitions and internal conflict resolution. Johnson, Amber Lauren Ph. Johnson offers a rhetorical ethnographic study of the artistic sub-culture spoken word. This study reveals that spoken word poets attempt to resist the dominate ideologies of a 11 hegemonic society through collective assembly and performing discourse. This study suggests that, through the transgression of dominant ideologies, poets are able to actualize and validate personal experience. Conversely, this study also illustrates the ways in which spoken word poets support and reinforce dominant ideologies.

DOWNLOAD PDF VOICE ACTIVATED : CONTEMPORARY ACADEMIC POETRY READINGS TO THE NATIONAL POETRY SLAM

Chapter 4 : “Scratch and Dent Dreams,” Slam Poetry with Eric Darby “ David J. Bauman

The Spoken Word Collective (a student organization dedicated to both academic and slam poetry) lets students take their passion for poetry beyond the classroom, as does the college's annual Dead Poets Slam event and the annual Poetry Festival (the largest free poetry festival in New York State).

Performance poetry is not one genre. Some chant, sing or dance. Some stand rooted to the spot and stare. Some chat their way in and out of their poems like stand-ups. Some confess, some rage. Some play with words, some talk plain. Performance poetry uses the stage as the page, transforming poetry readings into theatrical events. While the recent resurgence of performance poets is seen as a reaction against mainstream, print-based poetry, the style listens back to the classic role of the poet, who recited notable happenings, emotions, and perceptions. Traditional poems utilise standard structures in part to serve as aiding devices, while contemporary performance poetry calls upon experimental rhythms as a means to engage an audience in the listening experience. The recent growth of performance poetry can be attributed to the popularity of slam, a self-identified movement dedicated to creating real-time discourse between performer and audience. What is poetry slam? Poetry slam began in Chicago in with its first competition designed to move poetry recitals from academia to a popular audience when American poet Marc Smith began experimenting with existing open microphone venues for poetry readings by making them competitive. It is a type of poetry where poets can express themselves openly in front of an audience. Marginalised identities such as gender, sexual, and racial identities are celebrated and get attracted by slam audiences. The poets and their audiences see slam poetry not only as a literary or performative art, but also as a political stance. This inclusive art form invites all people to participate, whether as a poet, audience member, or judge. The rhyme and structure are varied as some varieties of spoken word rely on improvisation. The beat is crucial yet performance poets challenge themselves to adhere their language to innovative rhythmic structures. In terms of themes, it is common. Performance poems capture a wide range of themes, while many pieces focus on social and political critique. The heyday of performance poetry seems to be here, the moment it finally receives the recognition and respect it has always deserved. In Britain, study shows that performance poetry has a long, rich tradition and performed while whacking the instrument to the rhythms of the alliterative verse. Iquo Diana Abasi Eke is a performance poet and writer. Looking across the many strands of poetry, we can never be certain which poems were only read in private and which were performed “and there are thousands of poems, which were performed but never got written down. It may not have been called performance poetry at the time, but it was clearly flourishing. Meanwhile, throughout the history of education, children have chosen or been coaxed to recite poems. And listening to him is a glimpse of a theatrical performance. Nigerian poetry has been redefined. Spoken word is expressive and free, enabling performers to speak openly and honestly about issues in a controlled and safe environment. Later, poetry was incorporated into theatrical events, when forms such as the ode accompanied music throughout the acts. Over the centuries, oral poetry gave rise to a variety of forms and styles. Ballads and villanelles captured the adventure and romance of their day. Although these oral forms of poetry were quite popular, the greater role of printed text transformed many listeners into solitary readers, and new poets began to focus on the written presentation of their work. The modern rebirth came as early 20th century artists rethought longstanding perspectives on art. Many poets abandoned more accepted forms of poetry to experiment with combining various media into their public performances. Many Nigerian poets also embraced this experimentation with sound and performance. However, both Louis Zukofsky and Charles Olson motivated artists to look deeper into the performance of poetry. Spoken word poetry is on the rise, yet the dominant poets of the s and s continued to underestimate the importance of performance poetry. The rise of hip-hop in the late s led to new ways for nontraditional wordsmiths to showcase their skills onstage. In response to what he saw as elitist and overly academic approaches to poetry, Chicagoan Marc Smith began hosting open mic nights in , focusing these events on poets performing their work, as opposed to reciting it

DOWNLOAD PDF VOICE ACTIVATED : CONTEMPORARY ACADEMIC POETRY READINGS TO THE NATIONAL POETRY SLAM

aloud. The popularity of these events led Smith to host performance poetry competitions, called poetry slams, where competitors were given three minutes to present their work to a set of judges selected from the audience. To this day, Marc Smith continues to host The Uptown Poetry Slam in Chicago, an event featuring a touring poet, an open mic, and a poetry slam. We are passionate about Spoken Word Poetry as a genre of entertainment, a tool to increase the level of literacy, a means of livelihood and a medium of communication among people across the globe. And with our real time twitter updates, online streaming and post event activities videos, pictures and event reports we have over 5, people listening, watching and enjoying our events. The ritual of passage entails gathering all the hidden truths in the zones of the here and now, the vaults of the ancestors, and the seeds in the wombs questing to be born. Birth pangs can be bloody and indeed painful, but one must perforce brave through the pains in the spirited dare toward harmony. In the end poetry goes way ahead of just being an object of detached appreciation into the very essence of being. If the mood does not sound right, then there is no poem. The reader gets to grips with the burden of the poet through language that churns the mind and enters into hidden spaces. And the popularity of the slam poetry events had given fresh fillips to the art. Larger audiences still receive slam poets at packed events across the country and the world, such as the reading series at the Bowery Poetry Club in New York City and the competitions for the National Poetry Slam. Just as other poetry forms are transitioning to web-based journals, slam poets are achieving new levels of prominence, thanks to YouTube, tweeter updates and other user-generated media outlets.

DOWNLOAD PDF VOICE ACTIVATED : CONTEMPORARY ACADEMIC POETRY READINGS TO THE NATIONAL POETRY SLAM

Chapter 5 : 10 best Poetry slam images on Pinterest | Teaching poetry, Slam poetry and Teaching cursive

The tone is scholarly yet often playful, especially in the final chapter, in which Wheeler visits a contrasting pair of poetry performance events: the National Poetry Slam and the "po-biz" gathering of the Association of Writers and Writing Programs (AWP) convention.

On its own, "eyes bite" is very disturbing. His halting, hesitant, breathless style is immediately recognizable, and it presents writers with new ideas about meaning, purely through lineation. But many poets who break lines disregarding grammatical units do so only for visual irony, something that may be lost in performance. What to do as a reader? Try a variety of methods. Reading a poem several ways allows you to see further into the poem simply through repetition. With poets who use techniques drawn from music—particularly jazz, such as Michael S. Harper or Yusef Komunyakaa—or poets like Walt Whitman who employ unusually long lines, there may be another guiding principle: Some poets think of their words as music flowing from a horn; they think of phrases the way a saxophonist might. Poems composed in this way have varied line lengths but they have a musicality in their lineation and a naturalness to their performance. They may have a recognizable sense of measure, an equivalent duration between lines, or, for the sake of contrast, one rhythmic pattern or duration that gives way to successive variations. For some poems, visual impact may also be important. In "shaped poetry," as well as many other types of writing that are meant to be seen as a painting might be seen, the line is determined by its placement in space. Some visually oriented poets present real challenges in that the course of the poem may not be entirely clear. Visual choices presented by the poet may be confusing. Sometimes the arrangements of words on a page are intended to represent different voices in a dialogue, or even a more complex discourse on a subject. Remember that the use of these techniques, in any combination, pushes the words of the poem beyond their literal meanings. If you find more in a poem than the words alone convey, then something larger is at work, making the poem more than the sum of its parts. Starting the Conversation We mentioned earlier that encountering a difficult poem is like a game or sport, say rock climbing, that makes you work a bit. The idea of finding handholds and footholds and ascending one bit at a time is apt. But some climbs are easier than others; some are very easy. You may enjoy an easy climb for a while, but you may also find that you want a bigger challenge. Reading poetry works the same way, and, fortunately, poets leave trails to help you look for the way "up" a poem. The best way to discover and learn about a poem is through shared inquiry discussion. Although your first experience of the poem may be private and personal, talking about the poem is a natural and important next step. Beginning with a focus question about the poem, the discussion addresses various possible answers to the question, reshaping and clarifying it along the way. The discussion should remain grounded in the text as much as possible. Responses that move away from what is written into personal anecdotes or tangential leaps should be gently urged back into analyzing the text. The basis for shared inquiry is close reading. Good readers "dirty the text" with notes in the margins. They make the inquiry their own. Talking Back to a Poem It would be convenient if there were a short list of universal questions, ones that could be used anytime with any poem. In the absence of such a list, here are a few general questions that you might ask when approaching a poem for the first time: Who is the speaker? What circumstances gave rise to the poem? What situation is presented? Who or what is the audience? What is the tone? What form, if any, does the poem take? How is form related to content? Is sound an important, active element of the poem? Does the poem spring from an identifiable historical moment? Does the poem speak from a specific culture? Does the poem have its own vernacular? Does the poem use imagery to achieve a particular effect? What kind of figurative language, if any, does the poem use? If the poem is a question, what is the answer? If the poem is an answer, what is the question? What does the title suggest? Does the poem use unusual words or use words in an unusual way? You can fall back on these questions as needed, but experience suggests that since each poem is unique, such questions will not go the necessary distance. In many instances, knowing who the speaker is may not yield any useful information. There may be

no identifiable occasion that inspired the poem. But poems do offer clues about where to start. Asking questions about the observable features of a poem will help you find a way in. Others say that no text exists in a vacuum. However, the truth lies somewhere in between. The amount of information needed to clearly understand depends on you and your encounter with the poem. This is because poems are made of words that accumulate new meanings over time. Consider this situation, a true story, of a poet who found a "text" at the San Mateo coast in northern California. As she scrambled over rocks behind the beach, near the artichoke fields that separate the shore from the coast highway, she found a large smear of graffiti painted on the rocks, proclaiming "La Raza," a Chicano political slogan meaning "the struggle. I understand, she wrote, why someone would write La Raza on the side of a building, or on public transport. There it would be seen and would shout its protest from the very foundations of the oppressive system. But why here, in nature, in beauty, so far from that political arena. Then, one evening while reading the poem in Berkeley she got her answer. A man came up to her and asked her, "Do you want to know? The text was not out of place. But such a task is to some degree impossible, and most people want clarity. At the end of class, at the end of the day, we want revelation, a glimpse of the skyline through the lifting fog. Aesthetically, this is understandable. Some magic, some satisfaction, some "Ahhh! But a poem that reveals itself completely in one or two readings will, over time, seem less of a poem than one that constantly reveals subtle recesses and previously unrecognized meanings. A life partner, a husband, a wife—these are people with whom we hope to constantly renew our love. The same is true of poems. The most magical and wonderful poems are ever renewing themselves, which is to say they remain ever mysterious. Too often we resist ambiguity. Perhaps our lives are changing so fast that we long for stability somewhere, and because most of the reading we do is for instruction or information, we prefer it without shades of gray. We want it to be predictable and easy to digest. And so difficult poetry is the ultimate torment. Some literary critics would link this as well to the power of seeing, to the relationship between subject and object. We wish the poem to be object so we can possess it through our "seeing" its internal workings. Torment, powerlessness—these are the desired ends? The issue is our reaction, how we shape our thoughts through words. We have to give up our material attitude, which makes us want to possess the poem. We have to cultivate a new mindset, a new practice of enjoying the inconclusive. Embracing ambiguity is a much harder task for some than for others. Nothing scares some people like the idea even the idea of improvisation as a writing or analytical tool. Some actors hate being without a script; the same is true of some musicians. Ask even some excellent players to improvise and they start to sweat. Of course, actors and musicians will say that there is mystery in what they do with a script or a score, and it would be pointless to disagree. The point, after all, is that text is mysterious. Playing the same character night after night, an actor discovers something in the lines, some empathy for the character, that he or she had never felt before. Playing or listening to a song for the hundredth time—if it is a great song—will yield new interpretation and discovery. So it is with great poetry. Published in partnership with the Great Books Foundation.

DOWNLOAD PDF VOICE ACTIVATED : CONTEMPORARY ACADEMIC POETRY READINGS TO THE NATIONAL POETRY SLAM

Chapter 6 : Poetry Nation | Enter The International Poetry Contest

Rachel McKibbens is the Women of the World poetry slam champion, is an eight-time National Poetry Slam team member, a three-time NPS finalist, and a New York Foundation for the Arts poetry fellow and Pushcart nominee.

Click to share on Pocket Opens in new window Slam poetry—aka, spoken word poetry, performance poetry—has been an important cultural force for many, many years now. From its early iterations in Chicago in the 1980s to its spread around the world since, slam poetry has become a veritable category in its own right, with its own aesthetics, tropes, and, thanks to Poetry Slam, Inc. Since 1990, the National Poetry Slam has taken place in a different city each year, and an Individual World Poetry Slam was added in 1995. In Poetry Slam, Inc. Rather than clutter up the piece with my questions, I instead created a composite conversation using their responses. These are their voices. I was mid-twenties, in my third year of medical school, and had just lost my first girl crush in a car wreck. Queer person after queer person got up on stage and read something they had written. Where else can we find a place to share one story and make that make sense to hundreds of people in three minutes or less? I started writing with BENT a few months later. She inevitably got me to the slam and on the mic. Before 2000, I thought slams were special one-off events. I had no idea that there was a national poetry slam, or an individual world poetry slam, or even a women of the world poetry slam. To document stories and first-person narratives that were going unnoticed. The New York City slam community changed everything for me. The slam community made a place that was my home actually feel like home. And the slam I went to became my church. And every week, I rediscovered my ability to be moved. You get three minutes of witness. Every week, I felt like I was having conversations with God. In a city where it is too easy to forget that you matter. Patricia Smith, for example. Author of award-winning poetry books. Sought-after professor of poetry at graduate collegiate levels, and at conferences around the world. A recipient of a Guggenheim Award. She is, by far, the most acclaimed poet in the poetry slam scene, but when billed as such outside the scene, the implication is obvious. The insular world of academic poetry wants nothing to do with us. Of having space carved out for your own voice. Of having the room to figure out what your voice sounds like and giving it the freedom to flex its muscles. Creating dedicated places for the marginalized, oppressed and too often forgotten or ignored is a social imperative. This statement forever condemns poetry to the page and to those who could see and read, which is stacked with classism and ableism, at best. They then went on to comment about the emotionality of the poems heard at a poetry slam. Again, this sentiment is laden with oppression, and has some dire underlying racist, classist, and ableist tones. This space is yours. This space here, we made it just for you. It reminds me of the worth of these words and the specific lives of the poets who brought these words here. There is something inside me that solidifies with purpose with each finals stage I attend. Obstacles come from every which way, all the time and out of nowhere. The most difficult part has been pulling together the powers that be and the mission of the event with little seed money. There are venues and sponsors and media partners and colleagues and ticket holders and competitors and volunteers and designers and— you know. We were able to garner support from the community which allowed us to do so much: Each of the five of us [the three interviewees plus April Ranger and MaryCae] on the organizing committee have had our own personal moments of challenge. We let the process be nerve-racking and disappointing, and jubilant, and successful. We see each other and cheer each other on and forgive each other all the time. We take a lot of deep breaths and just keep on going. Poetry is by nature visionary. It has the power to articulate previously unmade connections, and therefore introduce the old world to a brand new one. I would venture to say that any work that does this is poetic in nature. Slams, and performance, specifically, helped me grow more comfortable with owning my own body. Of taking up all the space I need. They also helped me to engage my writing in ways I never thought I could. Poems read at a poetry slam, particularly a regional or national event that is being recorded, has the possibility of reaching millions of people. The things you can discover about yourself when you have the opportunity to stop fighting, even if just for the three days of WOWPS—that is gold. My

DOWNLOAD PDF VOICE ACTIVATED : CONTEMPORARY ACADEMIC POETRY READINGS TO THE NATIONAL POETRY SLAM

greatest experience is touring internationally and explaining to a class full of students, whether in Australia, Germany, UK or Brooklyn, there is a world that loves poets. There is room for us everywhere. At the end of the day, you just want to make sure that the people who are trusting you with their time, their hearts, their support, are getting what they need from you. Into classrooms and boardrooms. I am hopeful that the poetry that comes out of slam will find its way into the hands of policymakers—or that the poets themselves become policymakers! Featured image of Mahogany Browne by Kia Dyson. She has released five LPs including the live album Sheroshima. She has had the privilege of leading writing and performance workshops for both youth and adults in Seattle, New York and Washington, DC.

Chapter 7 : Voices of the Sixties and the Modern Poetry Slam

Mr. Ginsberg comes to spoken-word from a different direction. As a young beat writer intent on making his poetry more accessible to a mass audience, he harked back to the ancient traditions of the.

Ok, here I go exploring terra incognita. I am talking about the alternative universe of urban performance poetry as displayed in its natural habitat—the poetry slam. Just admitting my ignorance is evidence of my geezerish un-hipness. I can tell myself that had I stayed, I surely would have ventured the experience. It was organized by Marc Kelly Smith, a construction worker and poet who wanted to inject some excitement into existing poetry open mics. The next year his weekly event transferred to the venerable Green Mill where the Uptown Poetry Slam was officially born. And it was a sensation. The slam is a contest. Although there is frequently a featured poet performing, others sign up with the host to get strict 3 minute shots. They are judged by a panel of five audience volunteers rating each poet on a scale of 1 to 10 in the old style of Olympic figure skating judging, high and low scores are thrown out. Poets must be the author of their pieces, cannot use props, costumes or instruments. They are judged on both the poem and the performance. The audience is encouraged to participate by cheering or booing. If enough poets perform, there may be second or third rounds after eliminations. Audiences have been compared to those at professional wrestling matches and roller derby. A poetry slam is no place for a shy English professor, the re-incarnation of Emily Dickinson, or the earnest, matronly ladies who spend their creative lives imitating greeting card verse. Folks of those types have occasionally dared the stages. What happened to them was merciless. Slam poetry actually takes the art form back to its earliest days around camp fires—oral tradition. The poem is inseparable from the performance which must be in some way dramatic, comedic, scary, threatening, or cathartic. Such an art form is, by definition, ephemeral. Most of the performed poems never see the printed page, or are preserved electronically on the intertubes. So how was I to proceed in finding some examples? A few have even made the leap to the printed page. Here are three that my inexhaustive search turned up and which struck me as very good indeed. Of course the poets themselves would remind you that what you read here is a poor substitute for hearing them performed live. Here is one by the founder of the slam, Marc Kelly Smith, who continues to host the famous Green Mill sessions. He is, by the way the same age as I am—65—which makes me doubly ashamed of my unhipness. I Wanted to Be I wanted to be so many things. Bigger than I was. A tall tower of building blocks. A shoelace tied so fast. Jelly spread smoothly to the corners of the bread. I wanted to be so good. All the numbers added up digit under digit I wanted to stand between the bully and the frail kid. Ready to take it. Ready to give it back. I wanted to do the right things. Pull the spit back into my mouth. Scrape the gum-chewed secrets off the bottoms of the chairs. Drag the dumb, go-along laughs out of the air. I wanted to stand on an asteroid whirling a mighty chain above my head, flinging an outer space hook probe into the heart of the Universe. And by loving—! Whatever I wanted to love. When I wanted to love. How I wanted to love—! I wanted to grapple the Ultimate Connection. What happened during that great revolution? After we pinned our daddies to the floor? After we made our mothers eat shame? After we rolled all antiquity and tradition into cigar size joints, Sucking in whole rooms of humanity, hoping to assimilate all the differences and heat the world.

DOWNLOAD PDF VOICE ACTIVATED : CONTEMPORARY ACADEMIC POETRY READINGS TO THE NATIONAL POETRY SLAM

Chapter 8 : Spoken word - Wikipedia

Introduction to performance poetry - Exploring the role of contemporary performance poetry and establishing the practical elements of performance poetry analysis. 2). Orality vs literacy - Analysing the distinctions between spoken word and page poetry in practice, renegotiating the relationship between author and audience.

Maner A decade-long slam poet, Susan B. Somers-Willett describes slam as a genre that combines literary, theatrical, political, and cultural influencesâ€”a unique platform revealing the race- based dynamics between poets and audiences. The Cultural Politics of Slam Poetry: More often rewarded and more likely to cross over into commercial arenas like television and film, black slam poets performing identity narratives oftentimes trump more complex and nuanced examinations of identity. Unlike written verse, slam places remarkable importance on the poet and his or her particular enactment of identity. Like any other serious performative art, hours are spent memorizing and choreographing pieces to refine a particular identity. Stressing exaggeration, slammers readily admit that the best poem may not always win a competition; the genre aims to be consumable, easily accessible for countercultural masses. Somers- Willett notes that many spectators, equating passion with authenticity, reward angry or confrontational performances. Larger cultural and political dynamics are enacted through the medium of live performance, as slammers commonly focus on marginalized categories of race, sexuality, gender, and region. For the founders of slam, performance art became an outlet for everything deemed unacceptable in academic poetry readings of the early s. Unlike the exclusive setting of academia, anyone could sign up to slam, and anyone could judge. Slam poetry became a means of expression for diverse populations that were largely absent in the academy at the time. Fostering a countercultural environment, poetry slams have gained a national and global audience, spreading from the United States to destinations as varied as Germany, South Korea, and India. Contrary to the popular belief that slam is an extension of the hip-hop tradition, the genre can be traced to a primarily white, working class bar in Chicago during the summer of Frustrated with the small, highbrow academic settings available for poetry readings, Marc Smithâ€”a white construction worker by day, poet by nightâ€”began testing venues to flex his talent to an audience outside of academia. Performing his poetry in bars and cabarets for working-class Joes, Smith collaborated with other local artists to produce eclectic shows featuring music, vaudeville, Dadaist poetry, and performance art. One night, after running out of material, Smith finally found a compelling format for his nontraditional audience: Unlike the quiet, emotionally stifled setting of poetry readings in the academy, Green Mill gave the audience a supreme seat of power, encouraging patrons to be vocal, to applaud or to boo the poet onstage. So if slam poetry has white, middle-class roots, why are hip-hop and, more specifically, urban black men, more commonly associated with the art? To answer this question, Somers-Willett studies the patterns of expression and reception of other forms of popular verse, specifically Beat poetry, Black Arts poetry, and the performance of blackface minstrelsy, in Chapter Two. Somers- Willett argues that blackface can be seen as an early form of performance poetry with its inclusion of songs, rhymes, and parables. She illuminates how blackface reflected national anxieties over African American citizenship, as its mimetics reproduced the master-slave relationship of black people entertaining their masters. The connection between minstrelsy and bohemian Beat poetry of the s and s similarly relies on black aesthetics. Citing poets like Allen Ginsberg and Michael McClure, Somers-Willett traces how Beat poetry infused call and response, the rhythms and improvisation of jazz, and, to a lesser extent, the inclusion of minorities, to work against dominant academic poetry. Troubled by its highly imitative and almost fetishistic tone, LeRoi Jones more widely known as Amiri Baraka left the Beats in the mids to form the Black Arts Movement, a forum created specifically for black performers and audiences to voice political discontent. Designed to generate political change, Black Arts poetry was performed to working-class audiences in bars, churches, playgrounds, and on the streets of black neighborhoods. By blacks and for blacks, Black Arts poetry embraced separatism, believing black nationhood was necessary to incite revolution. Using blackness as a form of entertainment and a foundation of

DOWNLOAD PDF VOICE ACTIVATED : CONTEMPORARY ACADEMIC POETRY READINGS TO THE NATIONAL POETRY SLAM

authenticity, black minstrelsy, Beat poetry, and the Black Arts Movement are all described as precursors of slam. Using techniques recognizable from black music—repetition, call and response, sampling, and beat boxing—slam has been appropriated as a black art form. Interestingly, Somers-Willett finds that the demographic of audience members who attend the National Poetry Slam is predominantly young, white, liberal, and middle class. On the other hand, Somers-Willett also reminds us that this reward may be an expression of white liberal guilt on the part of an audience that does not want to appear racist. What happens to representations of identity when the commercial interests of production companies, marketers, and recording companies are involved? What happens when blackness is commodified? To discuss commodified blackness, Somers-Willett cites the frequency with which black poets cross over into the mainstream market. Featuring primarily black men from urban areas, Simmons seeks to give voice to underrepresented individuals. While the rapper is much more materialistic clothes, cars, and objectified women are his subjects of choice, the spoken word poet is more concerned with political matters. Also, while the rapper may rely on trite rhymes, the spoken word artist is known for lyrical complexity. What makes spoken word so successful is its delicate balance between dominance and marginality, between white mainstream audiences and political messages of black marginality. Her interests include contemporary black US culture and feminist poetry. More from This Issue.

DOWNLOAD PDF VOICE ACTIVATED : CONTEMPORARY ACADEMIC POETRY READINGS TO THE NATIONAL POETRY SLAM

Chapter 9 : Performance poetry takes Nigeria by storm –“ The Sun Nigeria

The Academy of American Poets is the largest membership-based nonprofit organization fostering an appreciation for contemporary poetry and supporting American poets. For over three generations, the Academy has connected millions of people to great poetry through programs such as National Poetry.

In the national slam, there are five judges, but smaller slams generally have three. After each poet performs, each judge awards a score to that poem. Scores generally range between zero and ten. The highest and lowest score are dropped, giving each performance a rating between zero and thirty points. Before the competition begins, the host will often bring up a "sacrificial" poet, whom the judges will score in order to calibrate their judging. A single round at a standard slam consists of performances by all eligible poets. Most slams last multiple rounds, and many involve the elimination of lower-scoring poets in successive rounds. An elimination rubric might run ; eight poets in the first round, four in the second, and two in the last. Some slams do not eliminate poets at all. The Green Mill usually runs its slams with 6 poets in the first round. At the end of the slam, the poet with the highest number of points earned is the winner. The Boston Poetry Slam [8] takes a different approach; it uses the three-round rubric, but the poets go head-to-head in separate bouts within the round. Props, costumes, and music are forbidden in slams, [9] which differs greatly from its immediate predecessor, performance poetry. Many youth slams, however, allow the poets up to three and a half minutes on stage. Poetry slam in Paide , Estonia In an "Open Slam", the most common slam type, competition is open to all who wish to compete, given the number of slots available. In an "Invitational Slam", only those invited to do so may compete. The winner of the competition Friedrich Herrmann scored one point better in the finals than the second ranked Darryl Kiermeier. Themes may include Nerd , [17] Erotica , Queer , Improv , or other conceptual limitations. In theme slams, poets can sometimes be allowed to break "traditional" slam rules. For instance, they sometimes allow performance of work by another poet e. They can also allow changes on the restrictions on costumes or props e. Although theme slams may seem restricting in nature, slam venues frequently use them to advocate participation by particular and perhaps underrepresented demographics which vary from slam to slam , like younger poets and women. Poetics[edit] Poetry slams can feature a broad range of voices, styles, cultural traditions, and approaches to writing and performance. The originator of performance poetry, Hedwig Gorski, credits slam poetry for carrying on the poetics of ancient oral poetry designed to grab attention in barrooms and public squares. Others employ an unrhyming narrative formula. Some use traditional theatrical devices including shifting voices and tones, while others may recite an entire poem in ironic monotone. Some poets use nothing but their words to deliver a poem, while others stretch the boundaries of the format, tap-dancing or beatboxing or using highly choreographed movements. One of the more interesting end products to me, at least of this constant shifting is that poets in the slam always worry that somethingâ€”a style, a project, a poetâ€”will become so dominant that it will kill the scene, but it never does. Ranting hipsters, freestyle rappers, bohemian drifters, proto-comedians, mystical shamans and gothy punks have all had their time at the top of the slam food chain, but in the end, something different always comes along and challenges the poets to try something new. No poet is beyond critique, as everyone is dependent upon the goodwill of the audience. Since only the poets with the best cumulative scores advance to the final round of the night, the structure assures that the audience gets to choose from whom they will hear more poetry. Bob Holman , a poetry activist and former slammaster of the Nuyorican Poets Cafe , once called the movement "the democratization of verse". I want a floor of Congress to look more like a National Poetry Slam. That would make me happy. In an interview in the Paris Review , literary critic Harold Bloom said about slamming: The whole thing is judged by an applause meter which is actually not there, but might as well be. Hall has also long been a vocal opponent, taking issue with such factors as its inherently competitive nature [23] and what he considers its lack of stylistic diversity. And it made me really uncomfortable and Jeffrey McDaniel slammed on several poetry slam teams, and has since published several books and currently

DOWNLOAD PDF VOICE ACTIVATED : CONTEMPORARY ACADEMIC POETRY READINGS TO THE NATIONAL POETRY SLAM

teaches at Sarah Lawrence College. Lisa Buscani, the national slam champion, published Jangle Tia Chucha Press and created three solo shows. Buscani toured the nation as an actor and performance poet; she currently teaches at DePaul University. Patricia Smith, a four-time national slam champion, went on to win several prestigious literary awards, including a Guggenheim Fellowship and an NEA Fellowship, and being inducted into the International Literary Hall of Fame for Writers of African Descent in . Some renowned poets have competed in slams, with less successful results. Henry Taylor, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry, competed in the National Poetry Slam as an individual and placed 75th out of . While slam poetry has often been ignored in traditional higher learning institutions, it slowly is finding its way into courses and programs of study. For example, at Berklee College of Music, in Boston, slam poetry is now available as a Minor course of study. The first statewide competition for high school students was held at Taos High School in , with the top teams and individual participants awarded plaques. Youth Speaks serves as one of the largest youth poetry organizations in America, offering opportunities for youth ages 13-19 to express their ideas on paper and stage. The non-profit organization provides free workshops for inner-city youth ran by Hip-Hop poet and mentor, Michael Cirelli. The youth poetry slam movement was the focus of a documentary film series produced by HBO and released in . Hip-hop filled a tremendous void for me and my friends growing up. The only thing that prevented all the young boys in the black community from turning into Michael Jackson, from all of us bleaching our skin, from all of us losing it, just losing it, was hip-hop. That was the only counter-existence in the mainstream media. That was essential, and in that same way I think poetry fills a very huge void today [among] youth. And I guess I count myself among the youth.