

A Poetry slam used in Canada

A poetry slam is traditionally a competition for performance poetry, however our intention is to dispense with the competitive aspect, and just make it fun. As part of EARTHfest, a one day festival honouring our planet Earth, the Poetry Slam will take place in the evening.

Here's how we see it working:

- Each participant will read two or three Earth-based poems, using animated, performance-like mannerisms, to get the audience stirred up and participating.
- The entire event will last about one half hour, depending on how many poets participate.
- The audience will be encouraged to cheer, boo, hiss or generally encourage the poet

Examples of the participating poems:

A SONG OF PRAISE OR A SONG OF LAMENT

When did we lose our connection to the Planet?
Was it when electricity gave us the false sense that we were mightier than the tallest tree
The highest mountain or the swiftest river?
Was it when our religious leaders told us that plundering resources was part of God's plan?
Was it when coal and oil freed us from the dependence on forests and fields?
The First Peoples tried to warn us-
The natural world is bounteous, but has a breaking point.
Sever too many of those connections and the web will turn to dust.
Are we at that point now?
Broken links in the chain... species gone, acid seas, polluted waters, high carbon
concentrations, disappearing forests, erosion of soils and changing climate.
Where is the breaking point
And how will we know when we've reached it?
If the natural world breaks down, we go with it.
If we thought we weren't connected to the Planet
We'll find out soon enough how wrong we were!

TRUE PROPHECY AND SACRILEGE

Dominion over the planet ...
Consumerism and profit ...

Mass manufacturing, Intensive farming ...
Land degradation, draining wetlands, slaughtering rain forests ...
No sustenance for insects, animals and birds, clearing the skies and the fields of life.
Carbon dioxide hanging around in the atmosphere for centuries...
Deeper droughts, fiercer storms, more erratic monsoons, deadly heat waves,
Tens of millions of acres ravaged by fire, melting glaciers, rising seas.
Ocean acidification, coral bleaching, expansion of marine dead zones.
The essential interconnected web of life getting smaller and increasingly frayed.
This should provoke us to fury!
And channel that rage into humanity's most unifying Crusade!

What If?

Sometimes I wonder
If 2,000 years ago
Instead of worshipping the cross
We worshipped the tree from whence it came.
If instead of worshipping the man we worshipped the land that nurtured him.
Would we have carried out the wholesale ruin of a life form that we hold sacred?
If each drop of water was holy,
Each patch of land,
Each living being,
Each forest and hill,
Would Gaia, our Earth,
Suffer as She is today?
Would our future be in such peril?
It's not too late to alter course.
To begin the healing, we must shift
From endless growth and dominion
Towards the passion of restoring Gaia
And Her vast life giving gifts.
All of us united in this quest.