



2019 POETRY SLAM FOR PEACE CHAN SPACE NEW YORK

The Third Annual Poetry Slam for Peace, the signature GFLP event leading up to the United Nations International Day of Peace, was held at Chan Space on September 19, 2019.

The Poetry Slam for Peace was produced by GFLP and the Nuyorican Poet's Cafe. It was co-sponsored by the Museum of World Religions, the NGO Committee on Sustainable Development-NY and Unity Earth. The Program which is attached gives a description of the event, a biography of the featured poets and the background of the sponsors. Both Guang Guo Shih and I spoke as part of the introduction to the event.

This year's theme for the 2019 Poetry Slam for Peace was for poets from different traditions sharing their understandings of peace. The poets addressed the issues of what peace means to them, coupled with highly personal experiences, recognizing the inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human race. (Program Attached).

The Poetry Slam for Peace this year was again engaging for the poets and audience, bringing the diverse communities. The Poetry Slam for Peace also is a powerful way to bring awareness to a community of talented young people of the International Day of Peace and to introduce this community of young people to GFLP and Chan Space, serving as vehicles to spread the word of Peace around the world.

Another important element of this year was bringing together GFLP, Chan Space and the Museum of World Religions in a joint activity to create a larger presence in New York City. We worked well together and offered each other support to further our mission here. Many of the poets expressed interest in returning to Chan Space for other programs, and we are learning the process to make Chan Space a home for programs and events.

POETRY SLAM FOR PEACE

AN ANNUAL EVENT TO CELEBRATE THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

CHAN SPACE NEW YORK - 219 E 60TH STREET
SEPTEMBER 19, 2019

Produced by the Nuyorican Poets Cafe and Global Family for Love and Peace
Sponsored by Global Family for Love and Peace, the Museum of World Religions,
the NGO Committee on Sustainable Development-NY and UNITY EARTH.

Chan Space New York is part of Ling Jiou Mountain Buddhist Society, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

The United Nations International Day of Peace, September 21st, is observed "... as a day of global ceasefire and non-violence, an invitation to all nations and people to honour a cessation of hostilities for the duration of the Day." The United Nations invites all "... to commemorate the International Day of Peace through education and public awareness, and to cooperate with the United Nations in the establishment of the global ceasefire." The United Nations affirms that the observance and celebration of the International Day of Peace "... strengthens the ideals of peace and alleviates tensions and causes of conflict."

<https://www.un.org/en/events/peaceday/>

Global Family for Love and Peace was founded by Dharma Master Hsin Tao, who was tricked into joining a Burmese guerrilla army at nine years old. At the age of 15 Master Hsin Tao heard the story of Bodhisattva Guanyin, the Goddess of Compassion. From that moment, Master Hsin Tao made a vow to spend his life following the spiritual example of Bodhisattva Guanyin, working for peace through dialogue, education and service. The long-term goal of GFLP is to sow the seed of peace bringing to life the United Nations Resolution on the Right of Peoples to Peace (A/RES/39/11): that "peoples of our planet have a sacred right to peace" and that "the maintenance of a peaceful life for peoples is the sacred duty of each State". <http://gflp.org/>

Nuyorican Poets Cafe, a cultural icon on New York's Lower East Side since 1973, presents groundbreaking works of literature, music, theater, performance art, poetry slam, hip-hop, visual art, and champions established as well as rising artists from every background and age group.

<https://www.nuyorican.org/>

The Museum of World Religions founded by Master Hsin Tao utilizes the principles of nature to inspire love and peace through teachings of the world's religious and spiritual traditions. The Museum's interactive exhibits and the recreation of real-life experiences allows the visitor to better understand the bewilderment about life and enables them to reaffirm life's worth. https://www.mwr.org.tw/mwr_en

Chan Space New York sits in contrast to a fast-paced city life, offering respite and teachings through dynamic and contemporary programs to encourage curiosity, conversation, reflection and enjoyment. Under the guidance of Venerable Guang Guo Shih, there are weekly meditation classes, courses on Buddhism, walking and sound meditations, musical events, art shows and calligraphy and tea ceremony classes.

<https://chanspacenewyork.org/>

NGO Committee on Sustainable Development-NY monitors implementation of the commitments pertaining to the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals for the success of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The Committee works closely with relevant UN commissions and agencies and the United Nations NGO community. <http://ngocsd-ny.org/>

UNITY EARTH brings people together through growing a Worldwide Spiritual Culture fostering reverence for the Sacred and respecting all forms of diversity, using music, events and media to proclaim the universal unity of all beings.

<https://unity.earth/>

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Slam Poets communicate through performance art expressions of time and place in unique and powerful ways. In its third year, the 2019 Poetry Slam for Peace will use the format of an Intercultural Dialogue, with poets sharing their perceptions and understandings of peace.

Poetry Slams empower youth through the mastery of literacy and language – “If you don’t learn to write your own life story, someone else will write it for you”. Poetry Slam is recognized among young people of diverse backgrounds as a democratizing force. Poetry Slams encompass all manner of individual and poetic voices, using allusions to contemporary popular culture to provide a medium for crafting communication, venting emotion, and creating art, in a constructive atmosphere of equality, sensitivity and progress to encourage discussion, creativity, empowerment and alliance.

Rabih Ahmed is a Bronx born Ghanaian-American poet and educator, who utilizes the rhythms and histories of the African diaspora in her poetry to bridge the lost narratives across the Atlantic. In 2017, Rabih created LOVE LIGHT & POETRY, with a mission of facilitating accessible poetry workshops, illuminating poetry as a modality of celebration, identity exploration, and healing.

Timmie Larode was born in Trinidad and Tobago. Arriving in the US at the age of 13, Timmie began writing in college and by 2019 she was hosting open mics at the Brooklyn Music Center. Timmie uses the modalities of true modeling, photography, dance, and Guided Meditation with shamanic drums as paths of self-expression

Erik "Advocate Of Wordz" Maldonado is an award-winning writer and performer. His work has been covered by major publications and media outlets including PBS, the LA Times, Fox News, BET, CNN and Univision. He is also the creator of "Poetry Defined," an animation series that breaks down the varying facets of poetry (currently being distributed through Knowledge Motion Ltd., England).

Steven "Definition" Rice started writing poetry in high school and honing his skills at SUNY Cortland. Returning to NYC he began performing in all five boroughs after falling into the Nuyorican Poets Cafe. Currently, he teaches English Language Arts and Creative Writing at Harlem Village Academies H.S. and hosts two opens mics in his hometown of Brooklyn.

"Simply Rob" Vassilarakis is a Youth Mentor, Spoken Word Artist, Story Teller, Actor, and Dreamer. A born and raised NY'er of Greek and El Salvadoran descent, he is a founding member of El Grito De Poetas' all-Latino poetry collective and is the subject of a multi-award-winning self-titled documentary short film that aims to raise awareness of HIV.

Caroline Rothstein is an acclaimed writer, poet, and performer who tours internationally. Her work has appeared in *Cosmopolitan*, *Marie Claire*, and *BuzzFeed*, and has been featured in *The New Yorker*, *MTV News*, *Chicago Tribune*, *CBS Evening News*, *HuffPost*, *Mic*, and *Newsweek*. Lady Gaga calls her a “very inspiring woman”.

Elisabet Velasquez is a Boricua Writer from Bushwick, Brooklyn. Her work has been featured in many magazines such as *Muzzle Magazine* and *Centro Voces*. She is a 2017 Poets House Fellow and the winner of Button Poetry Video Poetry Contest. Her work is forthcoming in the Martín Espadas Anthology *What Saves Us: Poems Of Empathy and Outrage In The Age Of Trump*.