

“Grand Poetry Slam”

8 May 2010 17.00-21.00, Vabaduse Square in Tallinn

Europe Day 2010 will culminate in a huge live poetry and music show in the evening of 8 May

Grand Poetry Slam – poetry on the square

This year's Europe Day is going to be unlike any of the previous ones. Lots of poets from all over the world will gather on the Vabaduse square stage to perform for you live at 5PM.

Some of them are the best-known names of the poetry slam world and being able to see them for free is a very rare opportunity. And of course the Estonian stars are here as well. The entire event will be set up as a concert. Going for poetry only seemed too radical so most of the show will be accompanied by music – this should make it more easily digestible for the Estonian public who is surely used to musical mass events. Anyway, there will be electricity in the air and Vabaduse square will see something absolutely new and different. This is nothing like all the military action and revolutionary speeches of former times, it is a far cry from the gay parades, chanting Hare Krishnas and ecstatic rock concerts. The square has seen tanks leave the country and suffered as a car park and now, after a long time, it is there for the people again... This is the first time the square will host a poetry event. Something unheard of before. However, times have changed, maybe now the time is right.

Jürgen Rooste
Estonian Writers' Union

SPOKEN WORD

Spoken word is a style of performance literature that began in the 1990s in New York City and has by now become a major movement in the Western culture. Estonians should feel very much at home with this style since oral manifestations of literature, like reading it out aloud to the people around you, have a lot longer tradition in our culture than that of the written word.

The spoken word style literature (mostly poetry, although it can also be prose or general story telling) is generally written with the intention of being performed as a short play. Emphasis is on the performance: the way the text is rendered in speech, the manner of catching the attention of the audience, sounds and images. Each text constitutes a small performance or show. Often it is impossible to write down all the elements of a spoken word style text. Language-use is very liberal, it almost becomes a musical instrument and thus it is not essential to understand the mother tongue of the author.

PROGRAMME

17:00 - 17:20

Awarding the title of the „European of the Year“

17:20 - 18:00

Bei Dao (China/USA)
Jaan Pehk (Estonia)
Fs (Estonia)
Jaan Malin (Estonia)
Peter Waugh (UK)
Dizzy Les (France)
Tobias Kunze (Germany)

18:00 - 19:00

Aapo Ilves (Estonia)
Eiríkur Örn Nordahl (Island)
Elo Viiding (Estonia)
Wehvalt Koslovsky (Germany)
Felix Römer (Germany)
Fagira D. Morti (Estonia)

19:00 - 20:00

Tapani Kinnunen (Finland)
Andres Ehin (Estonia)
Karlis Verdins (Latvia)
P.I. Filimonov + Igor Kotjuh (Estonia)
Tommyboy + Leelo Tungal + Noizmakaz (Estonia)

20:00 - 21:00

Philip Meersman (Belgium)
Asko Künnap (Estonia)
Tuuli Taul (Estonia)
Birk Rohelend (Estonia)
AveNue (Estonia)
Chalice (Estonia)
Surprise guests

The show will be hosted by Doris Kareva and Üllar Saaremäe.

PERFORMERS IN BRIEF

Bei Dao (1949) – one of the foremost poets in China during the past couple of decades. Bei Dao was born at the same time as the People’s Republic of China and spent the years of the Cultural Revolution working as a concrete mixer. He was one of the most significant innovators of poetry in China after Mao Zedong’s death, taking aesthetics to a new level that was very far removed from the national ideology and social realism. Instead he went for boldly personal imagery, intense display of ideas and a more demanding sentence structure. Dao is one of the “Misty poets” and has become a living classic. The younger generation whose ideas lean more towards postmodernism, have opposed themselves to him using “Enough of Bei Dao” as their motto.

Jaan Pehk and **Aapo Ilves** are good natured troubadours who have written music and lyrics for many groups ranging from Eurovision singers to folk bands but they are also known for their humorous poetry and good performances.

fs and **Valter Nõmm** (from the Shelton Sun on electric guitar) form a dynamic duo: fs – a unique contemporary poet and performer – has asked along Valter Nõmm, singer and guitar player from the rock band Shelton Sun and together they will perform shamanistic poems taken straight from our lives in Estonia.

Jaan Malin is an Estonian poet and a connoisseur of Ilmar Laaban's poetry. He is the third best poetry slammer in Europe (2009 autumn competition in Berlin) and the reigning Estonian Poetry Slam champion.

Peter Ian Waugh was born in Barnet, London in 1956. He has been living in Vienna since 1981 and working as a freelance translator and English teacher. He is a co-founder of Labyrinth (Association of English-Language Poets in Vienna), co-editor of subdream, the Vienna Journal of English Language Poetry, and publisher of Labyrinth poetry books. He studied with Allen Ginsberg, Ann Waldman, Jackson Mac Low, Ed Sanders, Andrew Schelling, Blixa Bargeld, Andrei Bitov, Henri Chopin and others. He has organised and participated in numerous readings in Vienna and Austria, including appearances with the groups Dunkler Sand and the Karl Sayer Jazz Sextet and the Erste Wiener Lesetheater. His poetry has appeared in anthologies and magazines in England, the US, Austria, Slovakia, Macedonia and Croatia.
<http://www.poetryandsongwriting.com>

Dizzy Lez – a French poetry slammer whose musical roots are in hiphop. In 2009 Dizzy Lez shared the first prize of the European Poetry Slam Days contest in Berlin with Tobi Kunze.

Tobias Kunze is a German poetry slammer and hip hop artist. He has participated in Poetry Slam contests in Germany. In 2009 he received the general public award at the European Poetry Slam Days.
www.myspace.com/tobiaskunze

Aapo Ilves (1970) – poet, musician, singer, playwright, journalist, artist. Writes in the Estonian, Võru and Setu languages. Has published collections of poetry, prose and plays. Was one of the figureheads of the Tartu literary group NAK which is known for its emphasis on live performances of poetry and cheerful and folksy doggerel. Ilves has written lyrics for many well known rock bands and his songs have taken part in the Eurovision song contest. He has also illustrated books and CD-sleeves and played in several films.

On the web: <http://aapoilves.blogspot.com>

Eiríkur Örn Norðdahl is a poet and writer from Iceland and author of two novels. Norðdahl is also an active translator of modern and contemporary poetry and has translated Allen Ginsberg's texts amongst other things. However, he is best known for the wonderful performances of his socially sensitive and aurally intriguing sound poems. You can listen to Norðdahl at www.norddahl.org/english/about/.

Elo Viiding (1974) poet and prose writer. Viiding has written mostly poetry but her collection of short stories "Püha Maama" ("Saint Mama", 2008) showed that she is equally noteworthy as a prose writer. Her poetry and her attitude towards literature are very distinctive: her poetry

is full of social criticism, deals with different ideologies and stereotypes and fights against them, often almost methodically.

Wehwalt Koslovsky is a German poetry slammer who has founded such itinerant troupes as Poetry Punch Punch (2000) and Poesie United (2003). At the moment he is one half of the spoken word duo "k.u.k" which was formed in 2007. **Koslovsky** organizes workshops, teaches literature at the University of Düsseldorf, organizes literary events and participates at slams as an MC. Estonian public has already seen Koslovsky perform with poets from Poesie United in 2005 and 2006. www.wwalt.de

Felix Römeris is a German poetry slammer. He has studied acting and takes part in German poetry slams and team slams.
<http://www.felixroemer.de/>

Fagira D. Morti (1974) – an Estonian poet who uses this almost perfect anagram of her real name (Margit Adorf) as her the pen name. Morti became known as a member of the literary group “Õigem Valem” (“More appropriate formula”). She has auto-published several collections of poems. Her "Normaalsuse etalon" (“Etalon of normality”, 2001) was one of the nominees for the poetry prize of the National Cultural Endowment. Morti is known for her pictographic poems shaped like various vessels.

Tapani Kinnunen is one of the brightest stars of Finnish poetry. He has been referred to as the Finnish Bukowski – one of the socially aware, critical and not at all typically Finnish poets. He has won several literary prizes since 1983, has been the leader of one the major Finnish literary groups Nihil Interit, has published poetry in several languages. In 2006 he published a collection of poems “Hard Core” in England with the British poet Andela Readman. Tapani Kinnunen’s collected poems were published last year.

Andres Ehin is a living classic. He is THE surrealist in Estonia. He is more than an embodiment of poetry, he is an institution really! Any poetry lover in Estonia can recall his low sonorous voice. He can sing his poems, he can hum them or he can bark his rhymes at you as if he was delivering the commandments to Moses. Ehin has become so famous that his work has been plagiarized in Europe!

Kārlis Vērdiņš (1979) – Latvian poet, critic and literary theoretician. Has also worked as an editor for the Latvian National Encyclopaedia. Has published three collections of poetry and translated modern poetry (e.g. T. S. Eliot and William Carlos Williams) from English into Latvian. Vērdiņš has performed in Estonia several times. His often ironical poems have been translated into many languages and also been published in an anthology of young poets from Central and Eastern Europe called "A Fine Line" (2004).

P.I. Filimonov and Igor Kotjuh are the brightest stars of the Estonian-Russian literary scene who are equally at home in both cultures. Their texts have been published in both languages and they have been performing in Estonia, elsewhere in Europe and also at major poetry events in Moscow.

Tommyboy is one of the best known Estonian rappers, he is a poet and musician with extensive MC-battle (rappers’ equivalent of a slam-style contest) experience, both as a contestant and as an organiser. He will be performing with a rapper friend, a DJ and – surprise, surprise – Estonian poet Leelo Tungal.

Philip Meersman is a Belgian artist who has been actively involved in performance arts and poetry since 1984. His poetry has been translated into Russian, Romanian, Spanish, Italian, English and French. In 2005 Meersman established a sound poetry group with Sergei Birjukov from Russia and Peter Waugh from the UK. At the 2007 Teranova festival he was awarded the main prize “Prix de Lien”. He has contributed to the organization of BruSlam – the first multilingual open mike event in Brussels in 2009 – and organized various other festivals.

Asko Künnap and **Heikki Kalle** are almost one. Künnap is known as a poet, artist, board game fan, supporter of the native Estonian earth religion and a businessman. Heikki Kalle is a composer and guitarist whose songs have been performed by Jäääär and Riho Sibul; he has also composed tunes to many poems by Indrek Hirv.

Tuuli Taul is a dazzlingly talented young jazz singer and poet who is just about to release the first collection of her works. At the Poetry Slam, Tuuli Taul will perform as a singing poet presenting her own texts and music together with the Siim Aimla Group.

Birk Rohelend (1981) – a writer from the younger generation, member of the literary group "Purpurnust.org" established during the first decade of the 21st century. Birk Rohelend is a relatively young writer but his work has already been widely recognised.

AveNue – a rock group that was established in 1995 in Narva. AveNue has played the stages of Moscow and St Petersburg. They have performed at one of the biggest rock festivals in Russia – Намествие – and also toured in the United States. Nowadays AveNue’s music is influenced by folk music. They also perform the traditional songs of the Russian Orthodox Old Believers from the Western coast of Lake Peipsi. They sing both in Estonian and in Russian.

Chalice is one of the most widely recognized Estonian musicians who also writes and performs poetry, especially poems intended to be delivered orally.