

# Small Audience Can't Diminish High-Energy of Poetry Slam

By Sharice Porter  
Staff Writer

It might have been the "greatest little show on earth" but it wasn't related to the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey circus. It was "WordCore Poetry Slam."

On Oct. 10th four young men screamed out words of love, pain, sorrow and humor, like dragons spitting fire over an intimate crowd of 18 in the Cal State Hayward University Theatre.

On the first leg of a California tour, Big Poppa E, Eitan Kadosh, Buddy Wakefield, and Gregory Hischeck let listeners inside their minds through the most intricate use of the English language.

Eirik Ott, also known as "Big Poppa E" started the show by letting the crowd know, "This is not a Barnes and Noble poetry reading. We don't want you to sit back and snap your fingers. We want to hear you make some noise."

He had the crowd laughing as he opened the show with "Wussy Boy."

"Am I a wuss because I like poetry better than 'Sports Illustrated'?" he asked.

Next up was Kadosh, who holds a degree from the University of California, Berkeley in "spoken word" and poetry performance.

He had audience members holding their stomachs as they laughed at his recitation of "Pledge Allegiance to the Cheese," an opus about his love for American pasteurized processed cheese food.

In "The Muse," Kadosh showed how he felt about an old girlfriend.

"You're like the pair of hot pink underwear in the wash, staining everything," he said.

Ott came back with a poem called "Real Live Uber Grrl," which was a poem about his girlfriend Kimberly, "before they hated each other":

"When she smiles, she glows like ten thousand fireflies caught in a woman-

shaped bottle . . ."

By the end of the poem he realized he wasn't writing about Kimberly at all, but about the perfect girlfriend.

The next poet to the stage was Hischeck.

"I used to be a graphic designer," he said. "It was a pretty boring job, staring at a computer all day. I got a lot of ideas for my poems based on the computer. I came up with endless metaphors."

He showed this style surprisingly in "Command S," asking, "Why can't we save the world by hitting 'command option S' and give the world a different name like 'Babar' (so it could stay as it was and be safe from harm)."

In "Manual," Hischeck drew the audience in by letting the listeners think he was talking about a manual for a stereo but, by the end of the poem they realized it was a very interesting love poem, a manual of operating instructions for someone he loved. In the end he felt that since he read the manual over and over; he should have known her well, but she left him because he never really knew her at all.

Finally, Wakefield shook the crowd with an explosion of verbal bombs that fell from his lips with such precision many in the audience thought he was rapping.

"Decathlon of Destruction" and "Read My Disclaimer" took the audience inside his childhood and the trauma and anguish he felt growing up.

The crowd was on an emotional roller coaster when Ott came back with a serious tear-jerker, "There's a Hole in My Heart in the Shape of Her Smile That Will Never be Filled."

This poem was a biographical sketch a former girlfriend, depicting in great detail his feelings for her and the horrible car accident that took her life.

He explained so eloquently who she was and who she wanted to be. The words show-

ered the love he felt for her and the way he felt when he lost her.

"Writing this particular poem was pure therapy," he said. "The words just came pouring out one day. I didn't even cry at her memorial but, writing this poem allowed me to cry and get over it."

Ott came up with the idea for WordCore. He met Kadosh at a poetry competition in San Francisco and the two discussed the concept. Shortly thereafter he met Wakefield and Hischeck in Seattle and they became a group.

"Imagine going on the road with all of your friends, doing what you love," said Ott. "I asked them if they wanted to quit their jobs and go on the road - and here we are."

They all quit their jobs because they were always traveling. They make their income by doing shows and selling their books of poetry for \$5 each.

The money they make from the books is used to buy food.

"The (number one) goal for 'WordCore' is to expand this as much as possible. We would love to pack places like this," said Kadosh.

"I would like poetry to be as mainstream as books and music. I want it to be as common as salt," said Ott. "Poetry can be used as the sunglasses you look through to interpret your day."

"People will catch on to this next year. We are among the first wave of poets to come out," said Kadosh, who just got back from New York, where he finished filming for the Russell Simmons "Def Poetry Jam" for HBO. "They (executives) have to put a name behind it to get more folks to see what's happening."

Information about 'WordCore' and its members is available on the following Web sites: [www.norcalaml.org](http://www.norcalaml.org); [www.poetryslams.org](http://www.poetryslams.org); [www.wussyboy.org](http://www.wussyboy.org); [www.livepoets.com](http://www.livepoets.com).

# Festival To Celebrate 'Daddy of Dada'

By Amy Doan  
Staff Writer

After years of tedious planning and applying for grants, Cal State Hayward finally will open its Duchamp Festival with a reception at the campus Friday evening.

"(Marcel) Duchamp is the most important show ever staged at Cal State Hayward," said Lanier Graham, University Art Gallery director and the moving force behind the months-long series of



It's art: Marcel Duchamp's sculpture, titled "Fountain," was his declaration that artists rather than critics decide what art is.

Duchamp-themed events.

The festival, titled "Marcel Duchamp & the Art of Life," celebrates the man who is often considered the "Daddy of Dada," "The Grandpa of Pop," "Conceiver of Conceptual Art," and the most influential artist of the 20th century.

Best known for his "Nude Descending a Staircase" and "L.H.O.O.Q." (Mona Lisa with a mustache) paintings, Duchamp once entered a signed urinal in a juried exhibit.

Duchamp, said Graham, "gave new status to artists by saying art is whatever the artist says is art, not what critics say art is." He was an avid chess player, fascinated by science, and held various unique views on art.

In fact, Graham used to play chess with the avant-garde artist.

He said Duchamp "grew tired of art that appeals only to the eye, and worked to elevate contemporary art above

the merely visual and physical to the level of the metaphysical. His philosophical statements are among the most profound in the history of art."

Friday's opening reception will begin at 5 p.m. in the University Art Gallery.

The Music Department will perform an original, chess-based dance in the courtyard adjacent to the gallery. Dressed as chess pieces, the dancers will move across a huge chess board to music by Duchamp and John Cage, performed under the direction of Scot Gresham-Lancaster.

"Unusual and attractive foods" will be catered by Bari Hendershot of Silk Rose in Concord, who will prepare a variety of light appetizers and French countryside cuisine.

Hendershot has given the dishes clever names such as "Food Descending a Staircase" and "Breadymade."

The Duchamp Festival will begin Saturday with "Marcel Duchamp: Through the Ages." According to Graham, this symposium will feature "the finest, best-known Duchamp specialists giving a presentation of new research."

"The Bay Area is a hotbed for Duchamp experts," he said.

Graham will be among the

symposium speakers, who also include Kenneth Baker, chief art critic of the San Francisco Chronicle; James Housefield (formerly of CSUH) of Southwest Texas University; Wanda Corn of Stanford University; James McManus of Cal State University, Chico; and Moira Roth of Mills College.

Both events will be hosted by CSUH Friends of the Arts.

The Duchamp Festival will continue through March, with a forensics team debating "Was Marcel Duchamp the most influential artist of the 20th century?" on November 1, Edgardo de la Cruz directing Alfred Jarry's "UBU ROI" next month, and chess-themed Duchampian dance in March.

Some of Duchamp's most famous works, as well as related post-Duchampian works, will be on display in the Art Gallery through February 20, 2002. The University Library also will mount an exhibit of Duchampian books.

The Gallery will be open Wednesday through Saturday from noon to 3 p.m. for the exhibition, which is entitled "Marcel Duchamp: Artist-Humorist-Philosopher."

Admission to all events is free. Further information may be obtained by calling Sylvia Medeiros at (510) 885-4299.

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