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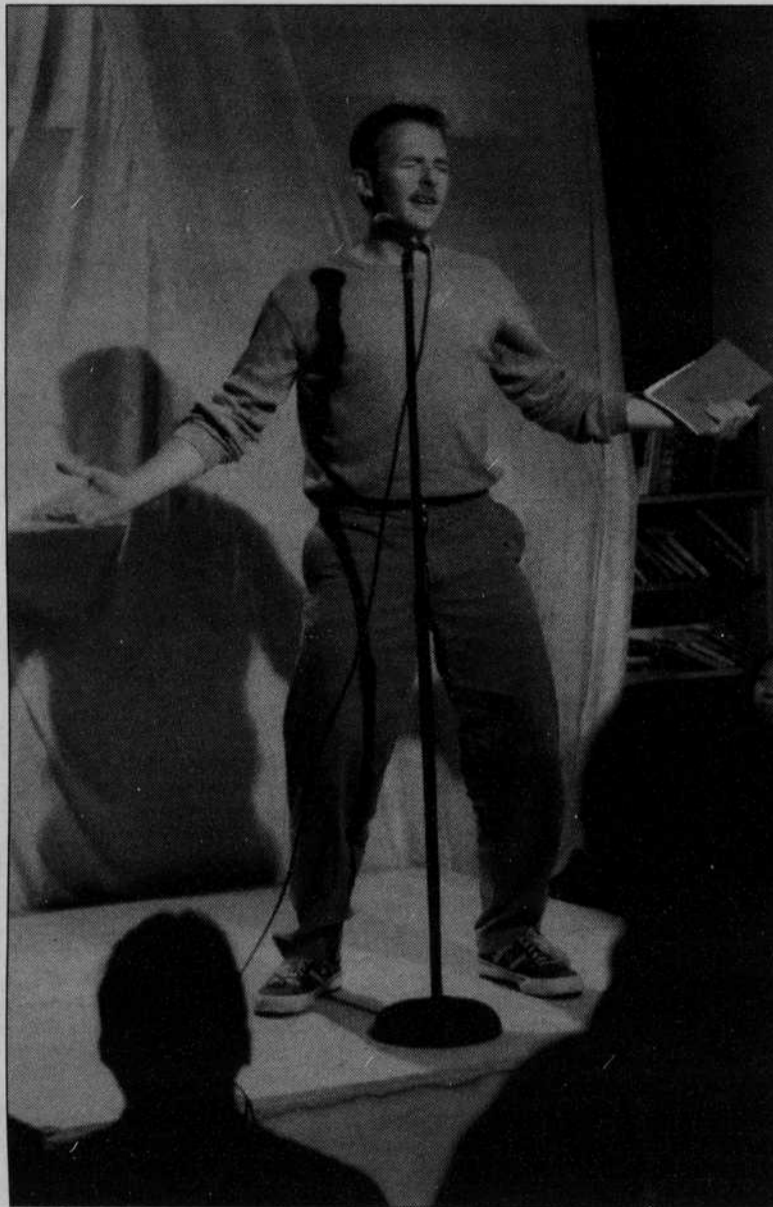
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Foolscap Books hosts lavish evening of indescribable artists at Final Slam



Tim Bobosky Photographer

Jon Labrousse warms up the crowd with a poem of rejection at Foolscap Books' Poetry Slam on Saturday night. The Poetry Slam winners will perform Sunday at the Folk Festival.

Four talented poets have been picked to represent the Eugene Slam Team

By Carl Sundberg
Pulse Columnist

Like I do with any good party, I arrived fashionably late to the Final Slam at Foolscap Books on Saturday night. The festivities hadn't yet begun, but unfortunately every seat was taken.

Looking around, I quickly realized I was underdressed. This was a formal event. Lavish evening gowns and various artistic forms of tuxedos seemed to be the way to go. If only I knew beforehand.

I found a place against a wall of books, toward the back, so I could see the stage. People were still filing in as Marietta Bonaventure, Foolscap owner and hostess of the evening, approached the stage dressed in a black ballroom gown and tiara to announce the beginning of the festivities — the open mic.

The open mic poets were fairly decent but obviously just a warm-up act. The highlight was Don Goldman, the crazy white-haired cat who gives daily speeches in the EMU Amphitheater. He was wearing a top hat, tux and walked to the stage with a cane. His poem about zombies was gruesome and hysterical.

After the open mic, the all-female Seattle-based Oratrix stepped up to the mic. Their topics ranged from sexuality in all its forms to America's image-based culture to witty pieces of hope for the people who at least try to do something with their life. The three women's wit and demeanor were great, and their poems were outstanding.

By the time Oratrix finished its set,

PART 3 OF 3

May 6: An overview of the bookstore and its role in the formation of the slam poetry scene

May 13: An in-depth preview of the final slam competition to determine this year's Eugene slam and a look at the future of slam in Eugene

Today: A reporter's notebook looking back on the finals and what went down

the room temperature had gone from a gentle summer breeze to a sweaty tropical funk. The place was swamped with people.

This was a good time for a better seat, so I found a spot on the floor, closer to the stage. People were packed in like bricks in a wall, blocking the walkway to the stage, all waiting with excitement. The room was seething with energy. And then it began.

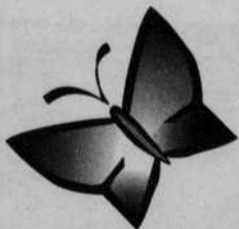
Trying to sum up or explain the poets' work is like trying to explain an acid trip. The words would fail to accurately describe the majesty conveyed by the six slam poets — it must be experienced to be understood. But what went on that night was surely an eye-opening experience worth repeating.

Among the six performers, there was Shae Shattuck-Faegre, whose poems expressed a wide range of emotions and thoughts about taking responsibility in this hostile world to living on a farm milking goats. She is a powerhouse storyteller.

Sam Rutledge, wearing a "Dark Side of the Moon" tie and red Kangol hat, spread minds with his humorous poetry about the holy trinity's appearance at a prom dance. His overall demeanor seemed to be "live happy, despite the surrounding darkness."

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