

Poetic justice served for planet

Mike Guidice

The Clackamas Print

Box elder bugs, baseball and ballistic missiles. Doesn't sound like the type of things one would generally associate with poetry? Well, clearly you have not been exposed to the realist poet Clem Starck.

He spoke at the college last Thursday as part of the Sustainability Project. For those who don't already know, the project is a focus on the environment that promotes local and global sustainability.

Starck received the Oregon Book Award in poetry in 1996 for his collection, *Journeyman's Wages*. He was also a finalist for the award in 1999 and 2003.

Even though he is not an environmentalist poet, while reading his poetry some will inevitably encounter some pieces that depict certain aspects of the serene nature of Oregon, something Starck has always embraced and appreciated.

"I'm an environmentalist, a tree hugger who's definitely aware of the degradation of the planet," he said. "I was happy to be invited here to read my poems, which aren't particularly designed to be environmental activist poems at all, but I definitely have that consciousness in the back of my head."

As any good poet can attest to, life experience is the major fuel for material, and Starck has plenty of it. In a Kerouacian move during the 1950's he gave up on his formal education and hitchhiked via freight

train to Portland.

"It was 1957 or '58, and I had long hair and a long beard, and I remember once I was in this bar, and this guy comes up to me and says 'Are you a beatnik?' And I said, 'Am I a what?' That was the first time I had ever heard the word and I had just spent the last year-and-a-half being what most would consider a beatnik, but I didn't know I was one. It was a great trip though; I spent a couple years just wandering around the country, hitchhiking, writing and working odd jobs."

"I'm an environmentalist, a tree hugger who's definitely aware of the degradation of the planet."

Clem Starck
Poet

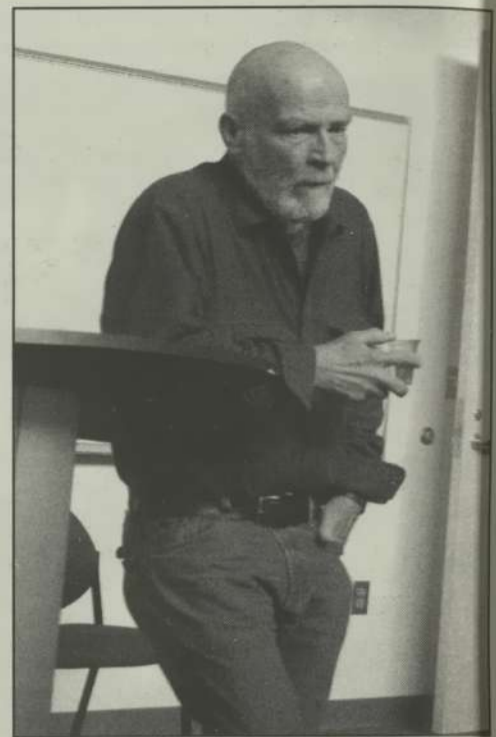
Starck's style is unique in that he prides himself in tackling the challenges of writing poetry about seemingly non-poetic subjects. Working as a carpenter to support his passion for poetry, Starck says that the two trades are surprisingly similar.

Whether building with words or building with wood, it's a craft dedicated to putting things together so they fit like a puzzle - with the end result being a strong architectural structure, or a lyrical liaison of words that flows with ease.

Despite his many travels and stops in various locations, Starck has settled in Oregon on 40 acres of property that he has since made into a habitat

restoration zone.

"I try to keep [Oregon] a secret; we don't wanna get too many people in here. It's the greatest place in the world. I can't imagine living in any other place. It has not yet been corrupted to the extent that other places have. I've even grown to love the rain," Starck added.



Brandy-Marie Faulhaber *Clackamas Print*

Award winning poet Clem Starck addresses the audience. He read various poems he had written and answered questions from the crowd.

International Day Today - Community Center

11 - 11:15 a.m. - Original Spanish play written by Instructor Irma Bjerre and performed by the Spanish Club.

11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. - Cuba Che band to play Latino music; also free. - Cha Cha and Salsa lessons.

12:15 - 1 p.m. - French Club performs
- Tunisian belly dance
- Puppet play
- Solo: "Un Jour Tu Verras"
- "Dejeuner du Martin"
- "Rappelle-toi Barbara": a multimedia presentation of Jacques Prevert's romantic poem

1 - 1:30 p.m. - German Club presents scenes of travel.
1:30 - 2 p.m. - ASL students perform.

CAMPUS NEWS & EVENTS

TODAY!!!

The Clackamas Foreign Language Department and language clubs will host music, dance, poetry and art from around the world as a part of this year's International Celebration in the Bill Brod Community Center from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The entertainment is free, and language clubs will sell regional foods. For more information, contact the Foreign Language Department at (503) 657-6958, ext. 2813.

May 4

Poet Derek Sheffield, who received the North American Review's James Hearst Award, will be reading from his work. It will take place in the Literary Arts Center, Room 220, from noon to 1 p.m. His reading is one of the events connected with the Sustainability Project at CCC. For information, contact the English Department at (503) 657-6958 ext. 2284.

May 9

The Seasoned Adult Enrichment Program will discuss current events, headed up by Joanne N. Baker. The programs take place at CCC's Harmony campus, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in Room 191. For more information about SAEP programs, contact June Routson at (503) 786-3856.

May 9

What does Clackamas Community College mean to you? Show your pride in Clackamas by entering a video, photo, collage, drawing, painting, or sculpture and capturing the Clackamas Experience in a powerful way. Submissions are due by Wed., May 9 at noon. Take submissions to Michelle Baker in the Community Center, Room 152 (Student Activities Office). You must include your name, phone number, e-mail address and mailing address. For additional information, e-mail Michelle Baker at mbaker@clackamas.edu, or call (503) 657-6958, ext. 2245.

May 9

Club Carnival in the Community Center from noon to 1 p.m. Contact ASG at (503) 657-6958, ext. 2245 for details.

May 12

A free workshop demonstrating different techniques for composting yard debris will be held from 9 to 11 a.m. at the Home Composting Demonstration Site south of Clairmont Hall. It is cosponsored by Metro and taught by instructor Danielle Folliard. Preregistration is not required. For more information, call (503) 657-6958, ext. 2246.

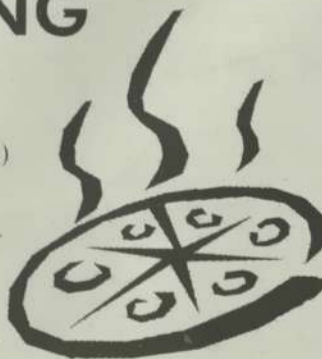
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