

American Sign Language Poetry in Mineral Point

Metaphor in Space and Time

Jack Williams, a deaf poet and performer will be coming to the Mineral Point Opera House on Sun., Feb. 15 at 3:00 PM. While a student at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at the Rochester Institute of Technology in New York, he earned two trips to Japan for his poetry and his performance skills. After graduating with a B.S. in Applied Arts and Science with concentrations Art History and Photography, Jack now lives in St. Paul, MN. where teaches at the Metro Deaf School.

Jack's poetry has been invited to be published in chapbooks and in Red Lights, a tanka journal. He has performed his work in Japan and Rochester, NY. He looks forward to sharing his talents with both a hearing and deaf audience here in the mid-west. Jack's parents and grandparents are deaf so sign language is his first language but he also has poetic skill in his use of English. His former teacher at NTID, Jerome Cushman, who is also a poet and performer will be sharing the stage and voicing for Jack Williams.

If you have never seen American Sign Language for the stage then you'll be in for a treat because of its depth and breadth of emotional and aesthetic qualities. It is a unique opportunity for both the hearing and deaf in this community.

The program will include haiku by 2 well known deaf Japanese poets, Murakami Kijo and Sugiyama Sanpu, as well as deaf poets in the USA. In addition to poetry there will photographs and discussion of the 2 trips to Japan by the student poets from NTID.

Those folks who are planning to attend are encouraged to bring a favorite short poem or a haiku, clearly written on a card or sheet of paper. During the intermission Jack will select some poems to sign and see if you can recognize your poem in American Sign Language. This promises to be an informative and entertaining presentation.

The performance is being sponsored by the Foundry Book Store, 10 Commerce Street, Mineral Point, and funded in part by PEN-International of the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at Rochester Institute of Technology and The Nippon Foundation of Japan.

There will be a sign language interpreter provided. Tickets are \$2 for all students and \$5 for adults to be purchased at the door.