



PRESS RELEASE

Bas Böttcher: 20 Years of Slam Poetry

Germany's Slam Poetry Champion Performs and Discusses His Art

June 15-20, 2014

Goethe-Institut Washington
812 7th St. NW
Washington, DC 20001
www.goethe.de/washington

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(Washington, DC, June 10, 2014) – German Slam Poetry Champion Bas Böttcher, the first German speaker to bring slam poetry to the German stage, marks twenty years of slam poetry in Germany by bringing his dynamic performance style to Washington for public events throughout the city June 15-20.

“Spoken word poetry relies on three key ingredients: sound, time and meaning. Combine sound and time and you have rhythm. Combine rhythm with meaning and your work has the potential to convince.” – Bas Böttcher

Poetry slams bring literature to the stage in an entertaining and competitive performance format. Poems are presented to the audience one after another by their authors, the art of performance inseparable from the act of creation. The order is determined by a draw, there is a strict time limit for each reading, and a jury or the audience then chooses a winner. Like techno music, slam poetry originated in New York and Chicago in the 80s, and arrived in Germany after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

One of the first to bring slam to the German-speaking stage was the 1997 German Slam Poetry Champion Bas Böttcher. Böttcher utilizes a dynamic, rhythmic form of poetry, direct and driven by the sound and melody of the language. His poetry shows sophistication, accurate choice of language and style, and highly developed linguistic skills. Böttcher simultaneously introduced rap into the German poetry scene and exposed hip-hop to more lyrical elements. Today slams in Berlin and urban metropolises of North Rhine Westphalia attract huge crowds that generate an impressive roster of new poetry stars.

Schedule:

Sunday, June 15, 5 pm

Busboys and Poets, 14th & V streets NW

Sunday Kind of Love: Bas Böttcher and Regie Cabico

A nationally-renowned pioneering spoken word poet, Washington, DC-based **Regie Cabico** took top prizes in the 1993, 1994 & 1997 National Poetry Slam, was the first Asian and openly queer Nuyorican Poetry Cafe Grand Slam Champion, and has appeared on two seasons of HBO's Def Poetry Jam and NPR's Snap Judgement. He performs throughout North America and The United Kingdom. Cabico is a 2014 Lambda Literary

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Award Finalist for co-editing *Flicker and Spark: A Contemporary Queer Anthology of Spoken Word and Poetry*.

Sunday Kind of Love Open Mic Poetry features emerging and established poets from the Washington, DC area and around the nation. Each program includes one to two featured poets and an open mic segment.

Presented in cooperation with Busboys and Poets and Split This Rock. Tickets: \$5 at www.busboysandpoets.com/poetry/sunday-kind-of-love

Monday, June 16, 6 pm

Goethe-Institut, GoetheForum

Rhymers and Rivals (Dichter und Kämpfer: Das Leben als Poetry Slammer in Deutschland)

Germany, 2011, 88 min., German with English subtitles, Director: Marion Hütter

Introduced by Bas Böttcher, this film follows four of Germany's leading slam poets - Julius Fischer, Theresa Hahl, Sebastian23 and Philipp Scharrenberg - during the course of a year as they participate in two German Slam Poetry Championships. A film about inspiration and stage fright, victory and defeat, art and commerce, poetry and life as a traveling poet.

Tickets \$7/\$4 at www.boxofficetickets.com/goethe

Monday, June 16, 7:45 pm

Goethe-Institut, GoetheForum

Talkback with DC Slam Poets

Panelists:

Bas Böttcher

Pages Matam, DC Grand Slam Champion

Clint Smith, Individual World Slam Poetry Finalist

Thomas Hill, DC Youth Slam Champion

Sarah Lawson, founder, Beltway Poetry Slam

Moderated by Sarah Browning (Split This Rock)

This talkback between Bas Böttcher and leading Washington, DC-based slam poets is presented in cooperation with Beltway Poetry Slam and Split This Rock. No charge. RSVP to www.goetheinstitutwashington.eventbrite.com

Friday, June 20, 7:30 pm

The Writer's Center, 4508 Walsh St., Bethesda

Poem|Poema|Poème|Gedicht: An Evening of Performance Poetry

Germany's slam champion joins DC bilingual poets Carlos Parada Ayala and Pages Matam for a multilingual poetry performance and discussion of how a poem transforms across languages and from one language to another.

Born in El Salvador, **Carlos Parada Ayala** is the author of the poetry book *La luz de la tormenta/The Light of the Storm*. His poem "Chirilagua Blues" has been set to music by Chilean singer Patricio Zamorano and was performed by his band at the Smithsonian Institution. Parada Ayala is the recipient of Washington, DC's Commission on the Arts Larry Neal Poetry Award.

Pages Matam is an award-winning slam poet, multidimensional creative writing and bilingual (English/French) performance artist, residing in the DC metropolitan area, but originally from Cameroon, Africa. As the Assistant Youth Programs Coordinator for Split This Rock, he coaches the DC Youth Slam Team.

Moderated by Yvette Neisser Moreno, coordinator of the DC-Area Literary Translators Network (DC-ALT). Followed by a reception.

Presented in cooperation with The Writer's Center and DC-ALT. No charge. RSVP to www.goetheinstitutwashington.eventbrite.com

About the Goethe-Institut Washington

On behalf of the Federal Republic of Germany, cultural institutes around the world provide cultural programs, language courses, support to educators, and up-to-date information on Germany in the context of Europe. Founded in 1990, Goethe-Institut Washington, DC is a center for German culture and language in the midst of the revitalized Downtown. www.goethe.de/washington

About Busboys and Poets

Busboys and Poets is a community gathering place. First established in 2005, Busboys and Poets is now located in four distinctive neighborhoods in the Washington Metropolitan area and is a community resource for artists, activists, writers, thinkers and dreamers. www.busboysandpoets.com

About Split This Rock

Split This Rock calls poets to a greater role in public life and fosters a national network of socially engaged poets. Building the audience for poetry of provocation and witness from its home in the nation's capital, Split This Rock celebrates poetic diversity and the transformative power of the imagination. www.splitthisrock.org

About Beltway Poetry Slam

Beltway Poetry Slam is a competitive poetry event. Poets are competing for a chance to represent the DC area at national and international competitions, including the National Poetry Slam, competing with over 80 teams from across the nation, Individual World Poetry Slam and the Women of the World Poetry Slam. www.facebook.com/beltwayslamdc

About The Writer's Center

The Writer's Center cultivates the creation, publication, presentation, and dissemination of literary work. It is an independent literary organization with a global reach, rooted in a dynamic community of writers. As one of the premier centers of its kind in the country, it believes the craft of writing is open to people of all backgrounds and ages. www.writer.org

About the DC-Area Literary Translators Network

The DC-Area Literary Translators Network provides a forum for local translators to get to know each other, to discuss issues related to translation, to share information of interest, and to promote the art of literary translation in the D.C. area. www.dc-alt.com

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