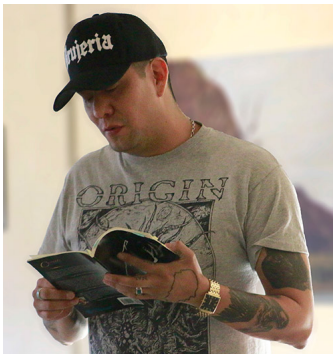


Pollentongue poetry flies into downtown Gallup

Written by By Boderra Joe Sun Correspondent
Friday, 08 June 2018 03:22



Founders encourages Native poets to attend workshops

Pollentongue Summer Series will be taking over ART123 on the first Fridays this summer, a poetry workshop and reading event organized by Diné poets, Matthew Jake Skeets, coordinator from Vanderwagen, N.M. and Lemanuel Loley, co-coordinator, from Crownpoint, N.M.

The summer series kicked off June 1, with its first workshop following its featured Diné readers, Bojan Louis and myself, Boderra Joe. (Do I even mention myself, well yes, of course!)

Pollentongue first appeared in October 2017 at the K'é Info Workshop, including their first writing workshop in March 2018 with Ryan Dennison at the Hozhó'ó Hólne' Writing Conference. Both in Window Rock, Ariz.

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PURPOSE

Skeets, who also is a professional writing tutor at Diné College and the founding editor of Cloudthroat, an online journal that aims to publish Native voices, said the purpose of Pollentongue “is to invite Navajo writers back to the reservation to read.”

“Most of the readers I’ve had are Navajo and they said it was their first time to read for a Navajo audience,” he said.

Skeets and Loley each hold a Master of Fine Arts degree in Creative Writing from the Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, N.M. And they have been pulling together workshops to create a space for emerging Diné writers of all genres.

WORKSHOP

Creating a space for writers is one thing, but creating a voice is another. About four participants came out and participated in the workshop held by Skeets.

Skeets began the workshop by asking, “What is poetry?”

Participant, Rutherford Ashley, from Fort Defiance, Ariz., said, “Fragments of who we are ... different phrases of imagery to get across of what we are trying to say.”

“It’s what the area needs ... writing is important to everyone and for anyone who has an interest,” Ashley said. “Something to be engaged in.”

SERIES TO COME

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Skeets mentioned that the best way to keep workshops and readings going is to just keep having them and hope they “continue to build itself up.”

To keep building, both Loley and Skeets have their hands full of continuously putting together events for emerging writers and artists’.

UPCOMING WORKSHOP/READING

July 6: Featured reader Laura Tohe

August 3:: Featured reader Tacey Atsitty with Collestipher Chatto

All workshops take place from 6-7 pm and readings begin at 7-8 pm. Writers are to bring copies of their writing to workshop with colleagues and are welcome to share their work for open mic after featured readers have read.

OTHER

July 11 – 15, 2018: Emerging Diné Writers Institute in Crownpoint, N.M. Applications due by June 22, 2018.

For more information, please visit www.galluparts.org/poetry or contact Matthew Jake Skeets at jakeskeets@outlook.com or Lemanuel Loley at lloley@navajotech.edu

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