

Strand Theatre Shelbyville, Inc.

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Articles prior to December 5, 2018

Shelbyville News Article: March 18, 2009

Written by David on March, 18 2009

Fed poets' propriety
?Lock Up the Thesaurus Indiana Poetry Tour 2009? comes to the Strand

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Wednesday, March 18, 2009

Experience a roller coaster ride of thoughts and emotions when the Reservoir Dogwoods bring their "Lock Up the Thesaurus Indiana Poetry Tour 2009" to The Strand Theatre, 125 S. Harrison St. on April 1, at 7 p.m.

Sponsored by Three Sisters Books & Gifts, the event celebrates National Poetry Month. Unlike the store's two previous readings at the Strand, which featured local poets, this event showcases a group of four Hoosier poets - Joseph Kerschbaum, Tony Brewer, Jason Ammerman and Matthew Jackson - who are touring Indiana with a unique dramatic style.

Stops include Evansville, Greenwood, Bloomington, Terre Haute, New Albany, Columbus and Nashville.

When scheduling the tour, Kerschbaum - a 1995 Shelbyville High School graduate - couldn't resist booking a stop in his former hometown. For Kerschbaum, performing onstage will have special meaning. As a teen, he worked in the Strand building, when it was known as Cinema 3, as usher, ticket taker, janitor and projection assistant.

For Kerschbaum, writing poetry is nearly synonymous with eating, sleeping and breathing.

"Any more, writing poetry is not a hobby, or even a passion; it's a compulsion," he said. "I see poems in everything. I especially like bringing poetry shows to Shelbyville because when I was there in high school, no one did that sort of thing, and I would have loved it."

The audience will experience a rare and special treat.

"We're going to be all over the map during our show," Kerschbaum said. "This is a new kind of poetry. Tons of energy. We bring excitement to the stage, while also presenting thought-provoking poetry."

Although tongue in cheek, the group's name does have a Hoosier connotation.

"We wanted to get across this mob feeling," Kerschbaum said, "but we're poets, so we're not scary at all. The dogwoods will bloom throughout the state during our tour - and there are tons of reservoirs in Indiana."

Although uncommon, forming a group of touring poets made perfect sense to the four Hoosier wordsmiths.

"All four of us are established in our communities, and we've hosted each other many times over the years," Brewer said. "I don't think a group like ours has ever toured Indiana specifically, and we thought it would make for a unique event."

Ammerman echoed brewer's sentiments.

"Each one of us brings a unique sound to the fold that compliments the other three," he said. "I have known these gentleman for a long time, and I can vouch that they will bring the bacon to a show."

Jackson enjoys the unique communicative properties of poetry.

"Poetry is my art of choice because it allows you to say the unsayable," Jackson said. "If done correctly, you can evoke emotions of your audience without ever telling them what you're talking about. The reader/listener forms their conclusions

and makes the work their own. That is awesome."

After the 70-minute performance, local poets will be invited to read one or two pieces of their own works. For more information about the Reservoir Redwoods, visit www.indianapoetrytour.com.

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Archive File: 2009-03-18_shelbyville-news-article:-march-18,-2009.pdf

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