



Welcome Back!

ROOTS

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ATOG: GEORGE WATSKY

“Another Type of Groove” starts off the new quarter with featured poet George Watsky. He will be performing his poetry on campus in Chumash Auditorium on Wednesday, January 5, 2011 from 7:30 – 10:00 p.m. Another Type of Groove is a spoken word and poetry event held on the first Wednesday of every month.

George Watsky is a writer and performer who believes in the equal power of the tear and the belly laugh. Born and raised in San Francisco and now based in Los Angeles, Watsky aims to cross-pollinate the stage, screen and stereo with work that speaks to both the humor and frustrations of modern life.

Watsky was featured on Season 6 of Russell Simmons Presents Def Poetry on HBO. He was the 2006 Youth Speaks Grand Slam Poetry Champion, 2006 Brave New Voices International Poetry Slam Champion, and performed in a record six consecutive Youth Speaks Grand Slam Finals. The last three of those audiences, all topping out at over 3,000, were the largest ever for poetry slams anywhere in the world. In 2009 Watsky was one of three poets who performed live on FOX at the NAACP Image Awards in honor of Russell Simmons’ lifetime achievement award.

Watsky has made strides to bring his poetic sensibilities to the theater world. His one-man show So Many Levels has been presented in Boston, San Francisco, Vermont, and at the Hip Hop Theater Festival Critical Breaks series in New York City. He has also been featured at the San Francisco and Washington, DC arms of the Hip Hop Theater Festival. He played the title character and co-wrote a 2004 adaptation of Dante’s Divine Comedy for the Living Word Festival and his stage play Harold’s Fall or King Will is the recipient of the 2009 Rod Parker Playwriting Fellowship. Taking it to the page and stereo, George’s debut poetry collection and CD, Undisputed Backtalk Champion, was published by First Word Press in 2006. Edited by novelist Adam Mansbach, the book is currently in its fourth printing. As an emcee, Watsky has performed on both coasts with his band Invisible Inc. The trio’s self titled album, a blend of jazz and hip hop, features R&B sensation Passion. He served as a regular on-air personality for WERS Boston’s hip hop show 889@Night for several years.



MCC CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF GREATNESS



Even with a great presence in the University Union and its influence around campus, the MultiCultural Center once never existed on the Cal Poly campus. Its humble beginnings began in 1979 when a group of students felt they needed a center on campus to educate and familiarize the students of Cal Poly with the various cultures that populated their campus. These students brought their concerns to Ken Barclay, the Director of Student Life and Leadership and the course of action to create the MCC began.

The starting years of the MCC were a process of gaining influence with other prominent councils on campus. Students first formed a committee on the Program Board. The Program Board was a council that would plan events like concerts, speakers and various other programs to enhance students' college experience. The committee that the first "MCC-ers" held would suggest speakers of color, or programs that would promote awareness about cultural issues and events. They sought many of these diversity-based programs to reflect the diversity they felt that Cal Poly had, but did not necessarily notice.

The "grand opening" of the MultiCultural Center was on January 15, 1981, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in the space where SESLOC currently is in the UU. With student aids and volunteers, the MCC was predominantly led by students with help from various Student Life and Leadership staff. Although having a new, permanent space, the MCC staff grew worried that their place in the UU was going unnoticed by students. However, even with the low traffic of students going into the MultiCultural Center, the MCC staff continued to work hard and create

cultural awareness on campus and lay the groundwork for what the MCC is today. The MCC staff wrote and published a magazine called "Cultures," that was distributed around campus and to various high schools. The magazine was a collaborative process with students, faculty and staff from all departments involved in its creation. "Ethnic Commissions," the precursor to Cross Cultural Meetings, gave a voice to the many cultural clubs on campus, and created a way for them to collaborate on new programs and events. Events ranged from a MLK Day celebrations, to Lantern Festival, and Cinco de Mayo programs, to name a few. These programs and the MCC's influence helped it to truly become a center for students to congregate and support one another.

The MCC was mainly student led until the mid-1990s when a full-time staff person was hired. The MCC has had many different places that it has called home — from where SESLOC is, to where the ASI office is, to the Women's center, to where it is now. But even with so many changes, the evolving process of the MCC has helped it stay current with students and still be seen as a high priority to Cal Poly. I asked Ken Barclay what were some of his favorite memories about the MCC. He said what he remembers the most is how it has become a center for students — students flocked to the MCC during the L.A. riots, they came to the MCC when there were concerns about discrimination by a teacher or staff member, and now how they come to the center just to hang out with friends.

The MultiCultural center may have had many faces, spaces and programs, but has had the same heart for Cal Poly students and the diversity issues they face.