



A Magical Performance

Poetry-Theater by Brian Paul Allison

“Amazing.” “Unbelievable.” “A remarkable gift.” These were just some of the reactions to Brian Paul Allison’s performance of his Poetry-Theater (Tour de Force) on April 26, 2013 at the Woodland Pond Retirement Community in New Paltz, NY.

With a repertoire of over 600 poems, all committed to memory, Mr. Allison chose about 50 pieces, some from antiquity, and many from the 19th, 20th, and current century. His delivery instantly engaged the audience as his trained voice, disciplined body movements, and emotional interpretations combined to delight the audience in experiencing these poems as never before.

Some of the works he performed were those of W.B. Yeats, Sara Teasdale, Wallace Stevens, Elizabeth Bishop, Billy Collins, Antonio Machado, and Stanley Kunitz. In addition to reciting the poems from memory, he also prefaced each poem with the title and the dates of the poet’s life, combining to create a true tour de force of memory. He also included several of his own poems, which held their own in such lofty company.

The large audience consisted of mostly poetry aficionados, as this was the monthly gathering of their Poetry Group. Heads nodded in recognition of familiar works and of favorites. Those invited guests, less familiar with poetry, also found the performance stunning.

One can only wish that everyone, poetry lovers and novices alike, could experience literature through Mr. Allison’s magical performance!

Helena Hassan